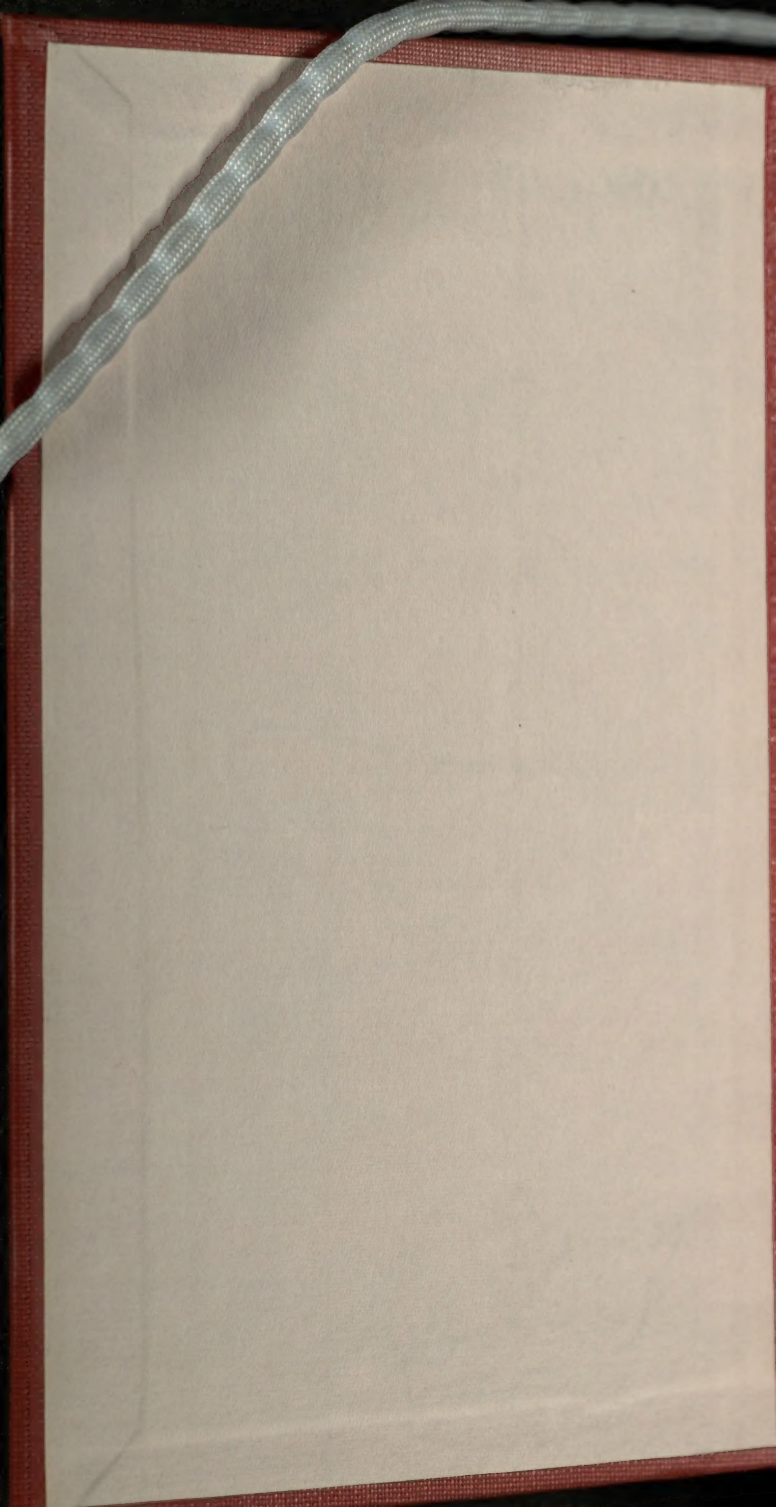


EX. 851.108  
400.12.14

THE PRIZE TREATISE  
BY  
HENRY WEEKES AKA

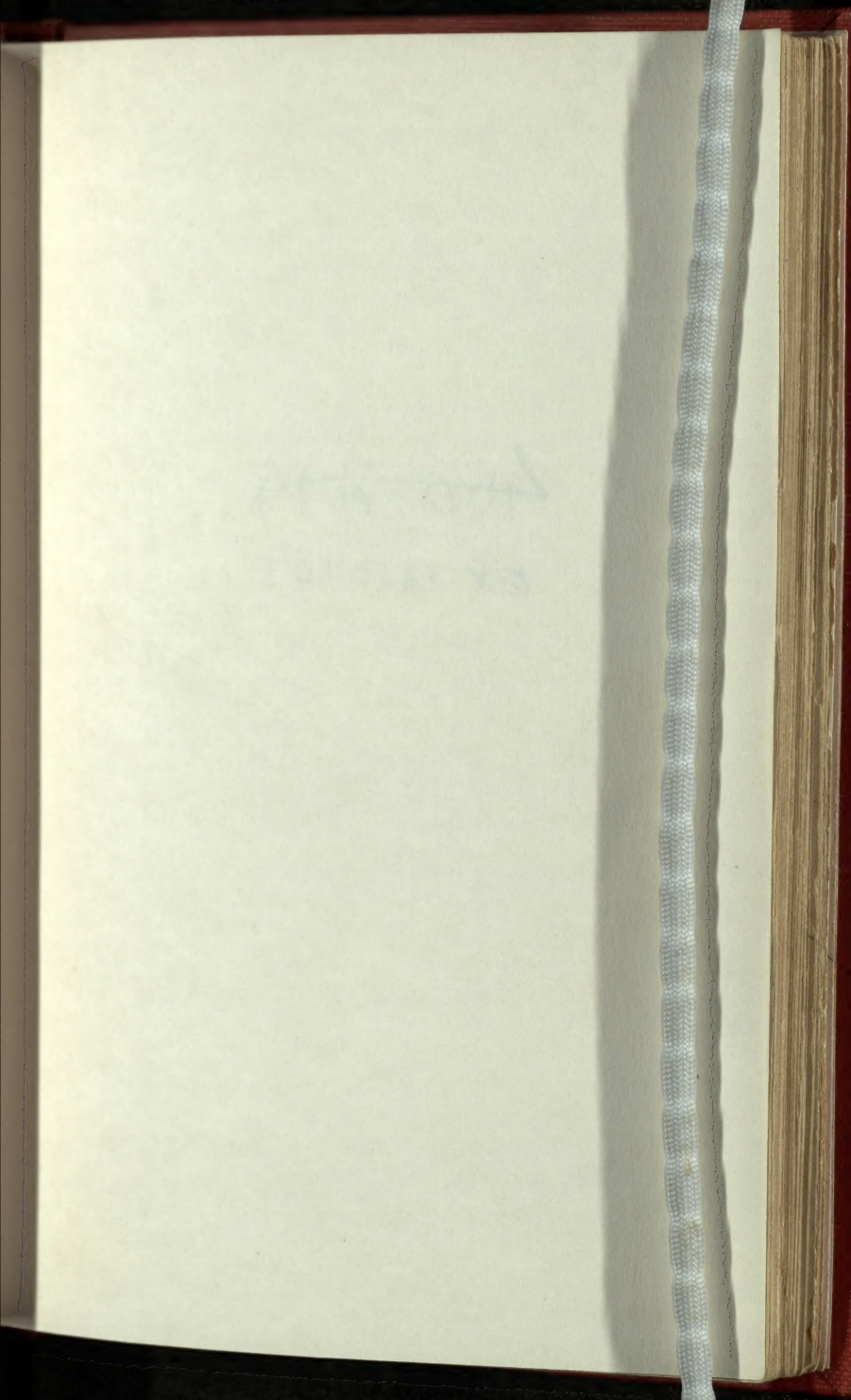












~~400. A. 14.~~

EX. 1857. 148



43 | 1

~~400. A. 14~~

A. 4.



THE PRIZE TREATISE

ON THE

FINE ARTS SECTION

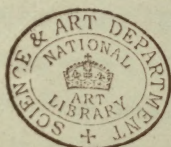
OF THE

GREAT EXHIBITION OF 1851.

SUBMITTED TO THE SOCIETY OF ARTS IN COMPETITION  
FOR THEIR MEDAL.

BY HENRY WEEKES, A.R.A.

“Docti rationem Artis intelligunt, indocti voluptatem.”—*Quintilian*.



LONDON:

VIZETELLY AND COMPANY, 135 FLEET STREET.

MDCCCLII.

*Chambers's*

THE GREAT BRITISH  
EXHIBITION OF 1851  
FINE ARTS SECTION

LONDON:  
WIZETELLY AND COMPANY, PRINTERS AND ENGRAVERS,  
PETERSBOROUGH COURT, FLEET STREET.

Hos  
26.6.96



## PREFACE.

---

THE following treatise, written during the time of the Great Exhibition, was submitted anonymously in competition for the gold medal offered by the Society of Arts, who, after having detained the manuscript for nearly six months, voted it the successful one. During this time the immediate interest felt in that vast undertaking had, as may be supposed, passed away; and this publication, put forth so long after, may in consequence appear to be, in more senses than one, a day after the fair. This is, however, not altogether the case; for if the gathering together of works in Hyde Park is to have any beneficial result, that result has yet to be manifested. The Arts and Sciences cannot be made to spring up in a moment, nor can good taste become general all at once, even by the high pressure of power thus applied to it; but it may be reasonably hoped that such will gradually appear, now that the year 1851 has opened the field for it. What is here written will,

however, be found applicable to the Fine Arts generally, as well as to the particular collection indicated by the title-page; and this the author trusts will plead his excuse for publishing it. Nothing tends more to improvement in the Arts, than—that which is much wanted in this country—a promulgation of their principles and a familiarization of the public mind with those general rules by which they are guided. It is not presumed that what is here laid down, is better than anything hitherto set forth, but it is humbly hoped that, on a subject of such great and growing interest, remarks, which are the result of professional study, may not be thought unworthy of attention. If they differ sometimes from what is usually considered as orthodox doctrine, the truth may perhaps be elicited by comparing opinions derived from practical knowledge, with what has already been advanced by the mere theorist; and thus good may indirectly arise.

The public may be said, as regards their attention to the Fine Arts, to be divided into four different classes.

First, those who, from a thorough understanding and appreciation of them, have learnt to read the universal language in which they speak, to feel its beauty and power, and to derive pleasure from its contemplation. These, the few in number, need no guidance. They can, of themselves, not only distinguish the right from the wrong



the good from the bad, but can also give to themselves reasons for their love of the one, and their indifference or hatred of the other. To them the opinion of the artist is of no avail; on the contrary, it is better that they should not listen too much to it, as it is ever apt to contain somewhat of professional bias.

The second class are they who, feeling a natural love for the Arts, have been attracted towards them in their leisure moments, rather as a relaxation from other employments, than as a pursuit worthy in itself of serious consideration. Though possessed of a considerable quantity of judgment—more even than they give themselves credit for—they have scarcely ever, while experiencing pleasure from a beautiful work, analyzed to themselves the causes from which that pleasure is derived, or the means by which its influence is obtained over them. The reasons which may have guided them in their judgment have rarely been well digested in their minds; and their opinions appear in consequence, even to themselves, more a matter of impulse than deliberation. To this class the author more particularly addresses himself, begging of them, however, to rely more implicitly on their own judgment, and less on the dicta of public writers. The intellectual power, which enables them to receive enjoyment from a fine work of Art, will, they may rest certain,

enable them also to pronounce on its merit, and decipher its meaning. Should they gain any information from what is here submitted to them, he will feel himself amply repaid; for the spreading of knowledge among the public tends, in Art as in other things, to the up-raising of right, and the down-putting of wrong. And in this all true artists are interested.

The third and fourth classes might not improperly be included in one, but they are here divided, because, though both really alike in their ignorance and indifference to Art, they vary somewhat in their behaviour towards her. The mere pretenders to taste betray themselves, generally, in their visit to a public gallery or an artist's studio, by their intense admiration for the antique, and their utter contempt for all that has not been sanctified by the halo of time. They praise with enthusiasm works whose merits have been established by the verdict of ages, and often see in them beauties which even the practised eye of the artist has failed to detect. With such as these the never-ending subject of regret is the decline of Art, the lack among the moderns of that spiritual enthusiasm that excited the ancients to the noble deeds done in their days, and the old time before them: and for this reason they are of course never patrons of existing talent. With them the author has but little to

do. An attempt to reason with minds so prejudiced would, he fears, be useless, and he must leave them accordingly to the traffickers in smoked canvasses and tobacco-stained marbles; not doubting for a moment but that they will duly pay for any knowledge they may there gain. To the man totally heedless of Art, it signifies but little what is said; he may not unjustly be referred to the quaint tale attached so appropriately by Le Sage as a preface to his "Gil Blas," where, if he read attentively, he will find a daguerreotype of himself, faithful in resemblance, though, may be, not very flattering to his vanity; and at the same time a hint of the value of what he has lost.

In thus describing the distinctions of feeling existing among the public in relation to Art, the author has no anxiety about giving offence to any of his readers; for, knowing as he does the patience it requires to wade through what is written on a subject indifferent to us, he has but little fear that any one, appertaining to those here distinguished as the third and fourth classes, will ever reach even as far as this point; and thus all probability of their fitting the cap to their own head is done away with. From those, however, friendly to Art, who may have given him thus far their attention, and who intend venturing farther, some indulgence may be claimed for the style of one more accustomed to his chisel than his



pen, and who has been educated to decipher his ideas by Art itself, rather than to discuss in words the many beauties of which that Art is capable.

With these remarks the author leaves his little work, *quod valeat*, to stand or fall, as may be.

## INTRODUCTION.

---

THE ORIGIN OF THE FINE ARTS—THEIR VALUE AS  
HELPING TO PROMOTE CIVILIZATION.

---

No great progress can be made in civilization without some attention to the Fine Arts; for the natural love of the beautiful, and the intuitive feeling for imitation, which Providence has planted within us, will, sooner or later, revolve itself in one or other of the different callings connected with them.

As man emerges from the simple state of barbarism, and enters into the more complicated one of educated life, things that tend to gratify the eye, to ornament the abode of man, or person, to mark distinction of rank, or possession of power or wealth, become almost as much positive requisites as are the mere necessities of life to the unsophisticated savage. As nations advance, labour and enterprise create wealth, and society becomes in consequence more artificial and intricate in its phases, employments more numerous and varied, customs and manners more costly and refined. By the wealth thus gained, man seeks to

surround himself with luxuries of all kinds; every sense or feeling with which he is gifted must not only be gratified, but its power, as far as possible, increased; the ear must be regaled by more delicious sounds, the eye by more pleasing forms; that which was previously constructed solely for use, has to be made ornamental in its shape, agreeable in its appearance, as well as appropriate to its purpose.

In this love of imitation, and desire to impress all around us with beauty, lies perhaps the germ from whence the Fine Arts have sprung, but by degrees they have been found to possess a greater purpose than the simple gratification of the eye; to contain a language which, by appealing to our natural sympathies or religious impressions, and connecting itself with our historical recollections, or our poetical imaginings, serves to raise us both morally and intellectually, as well as to soften down the asperities of our character, and increase our enjoyment; and hence their value.

To the real lover of the Arts their power over the mind is so self-evident, that the admitting their worth as a means of civilization seems but assenting to a truism: it is nevertheless a curious fact that few nations, whether ancient or modern, have paid less attention to them than the English; and that even now, when we have at length roused ourselves into something like a consideration or love for them, and are endeavouring to attract public notice towards them by the formation of public galleries, the



establishment of Government schools, and though last not least, by the opening of the Great Exhibition; men yet exist, eminent in science and literature, sincere and upright in all their thoughts and words; in fact, leaders in society, whom the world justly respects, who not only are indifferent to them, but who openly assert that the cultivation of the Fine Arts tends in no way to ameliorate mankind; that, on the contrary, it is often the means of debilitating them, by lending to their vices and luxuries a gilded covering that renders them more attractive. Their argument is based on examples, found in history, of rulers, who, while they have been the most liberal patrons of Painting and Sculpture, have shown themselves tainted with the grossest crimes, as in the instance of Leo X.; or on times when, while the Arts have flourished, nations have otherwise been fettered both mentally and physically.

It is urged, and with truth, that the most impure religions have been those that have most aided in the advance of the Arts; and that those creeds or religions have found in them a powerful instrument whereby to instil false doctrines into the minds of the ignorant. Grant that the Arts have been in former days subservient to these purposes, and that, while lending themselves to the aid of superstition, they received in return an encouragement which brought them to their greatest height, does it follow that they are to be accused of fostering the imperfections of mankind? As well might literature,

whose birth was perhaps even earlier than that of Art, and which was certainly united with it, be said to have debased humanity. Art was then but the slave to the feelings and opinions of the time ; and as such was more or less obliged to lend itself to the task imposed upon it, whatever that might be. It was but the reflector and promulgator of the knowledge it found around it. In its earliest times, when connected with Pagan history and religion, it was neither the founder of the creeds, nor did its influence tend to strengthen or increase their impurity ; on the contrary, we shall find that it was the means of bringing forward those features or points, out of which good arose, and of rendering the vile parts less effective in their operation.

Take, for instance, the Greeks, under whom the Arts may be said to have first risen from a mechanical employment into an intellectual pursuit ; and whose system of theology was but a deification of the different feelings and attributes of humanity ; whose gods were emblems, not merely of the virtues, but of the vices of their worshippers. Did Architecture or Sculpture, the two Arts in which they most excelled, make their habits more immoral, or the poetical allegories of their Pantheon more debasing ? It is true that that nation, by throwing the halo of religious worship over certain vices, removed from them the odium of the public voice ; and that the Arts, in some instances, were called in to assist in making their debauched ceremonies more inviting ; but this formed

only an exception to the general rule; and it may be even there a question, whether they did not tend rather to soften the grossness of, than heighten the zest for the impurities.

The remains of ancient Art which have come down to us show clearly, notwithstanding here and there an example to the contrary, that the intent and purport of the artists was to raise the populace intellectually, to excite them to deeds of patriotism and valour, and to love of the noble and heroic. The contention of Neptune and Minerva which should most benefit mankind; the labours of Hercules, the maternal affection of Niobe, are subjects, the contemplation of which must elevate the character of a people; and are alone sufficient to prove that the value of the Arts, as a means of advancement, was both understood and appreciated; the lesson, too, which Art conveys by portraying heroic virtue, was increased in force by showing the opposite side of the page; vice was exhibited, as in the instance of their Silenus and Satyrs, in its most natural, as well as most expressive and abhorrent forms. Men were taught, while looking at them, that by the practice of vicious habits they lowered themselves to an equality with the beasts of the field, connected themselves with them, both in form and character, assumed essentially, if not positively, the likeness of inferior creation.

We might go further in our argument for the well-working of Art in ancient Greece; we might descend



from the beautiful fables under which her moral code of laws was veiled, and ask the reader to remember that the statues of her warriors and heroes, her poets, orators, and philosophers, erected in such numbers in her public places, their forms idealised, while their names were deified, to meet the belief that the beautiful in person was indicative of the noble in mind, served to raise in the beholders a spirit of emulation, a desire to obtain the like honours by the like means.

The same feeling pervaded Roman art; courage in war was instilled into the people by the figures of their generals; bodily energy and activity by the statues of the victors in the games; Roman stoicism by the suppressed agony of the Dying Gladiator.

In the mediæval—or, as they are called, the dark ages—when Art revived, and became again the handmaid to religion—the cause which has always been her best nurse—can it be said to have obstructed the advance of civilization? nay, can it be denied that it was a powerful medium of imparting knowledge, both religious and moral? Called in by the early Christians as an assistant to their worship, it became with them a visible link between their prayers and the invisible throne to which they were addressed, that concentrated their thoughts, helped their imagination, and heightened the enthusiasm of their devotion; it was, it is true, afterwards perverted by priestcraft from this purpose, and instead of an assistant to devotional feeling, and an instructor in Chris-

tian knowledge, it was itself made the object of idolatry; but this cannot be said to have been the fault of Art, but of those who abused God's gifts by working evil out of good. We are apt, too, while dwelling on the superstitions which crept into Christianity under the dominion of the Roman Catholics, when Art flourished so luxuriantly, to forget that with this evil much good also arose; if the Paintings and Sculptures belonging to that church tended to propagate the fallacies of priestcraft, it must be acknowledged that they propagated also much of the true history and Gospel of Christ; and now that we have printing to help us to spread knowledge, we are apt to underrate the effect they had, in the days previous to that invention, in educating the people. We should recollect that they formed almost the only medium in the early ages, through which glimpses of holy or profane history could be caught by the vulgar; that it was through them, if not wholly, at any rate in a great measure, that religion was taught, and its doctrines impressed on the mind.

Had Art been the originator, or even the chief promoter, of the evils hinted at, they would have been found to grow with its growth, and to have fallen with its decay; instead of which we find them existing the strongest at times when Art was in its infancy; and rather weakened, than otherwise, in those days when it attained its highest point of excellence. Reason has, however, now so firmly established her throne amongst us, that there can be no further danger of the Arts being again perverted to the

wrong purposes they formerly were; and they who differ from, as well as they who assent to, the religion under which the great works of ancient days were produced, may now look upon them without the slightest danger of being led backward in their judgment by the associations with which they are connected, or by the thoughts which they suggest to the imagination; and it may be fairly asked if, now that time has cleared away the filth which had accumulated around them, they are not found to possess much that may yet serve to direct us in the course we would wish to pursue.

Rejecting, however, for the sake of argument, the Fine Arts, as a means of moral and intellectual improvement, and admitting them merely as a study, by which forms and colours are made the more to gratify the eye, their value may yet be urged as tending to multiply our enjoyments. By a proper understanding and thorough appreciation of what is termed taste, works of comparatively little manual labour are made to convey purer and more exquisitely refined pleasure, than others upon which years of toil have been bestowed, but in which that quality is wanting. That there are principles by which taste is guided, and by which the essentially sublime or beautiful may be distinguished from the merely strange or fanciful, no one who has at all studied the arrangements of nature can deny; and it may with justice be contended, that in endeavouring to search into those principles, and in promulgating them, we are but carrying out the intention of



Providence, who, while He has made all things suited to their purpose, has at the same time made them agreeable to look upon; and has given us, not only a sense of enjoyment from beholding them, but also an intellect to understand the system by which this double purpose of utility and beauty is accomplished.

## CHAPTER SECOND.

---

A SLIGHT SKETCH OF MODERN BRITISH ART UP TO THE PRESENT TIME—THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT HAVE TENDED TO PROMOTE OR IMPEDE ITS PROGRESS.

---

IN order to a due consideration of the Fine Arts, and to form a just estimate of their value, as aiding the general purport of the Great Exhibition, it may be as well to ponder awhile on the position they have held in this country, up to the time of the opening of that splendid national undertaking, and to give a few words on the various circumstances that have tended with us to promote or to obstruct their advancement. With this view we must take a slight glance at their history during the last two centuries, or thereabouts. It will scarcely be necessary to touch upon any period or style much earlier, as the friendly contest, taking place between nations in Hyde Park, is not intended to revive any of the crude and obsolete mannerisms that belonged to the Arts in their infancy. These are interesting enough, when con-

templated in connection with the times to which they appertain; but when imitated in an age of more advanced knowledge, become, for that very reason, absurdities; and exhibit, in the advocates for them, an imbecility indicative of second childhood. In the comparison of the works of different nations, whether in the Fine Arts or in the other sections, the object is rather, we presume, to create new ideas out of those already existing and established: or, by the union of different excellences, to come nearer to perfection in those which are already considered good, and have been pursued with success. The result hoped for is, not the contracting of Art within the limits it was once bound by, but which it has long ago broken through; but rather, the extending its grasp, the opening for it of new fields to work in, the discovering of new methods of portraying its language and thoughts, and new materials on which to fix its impress.

The fault of the English school of Art hitherto has been the too great attention to colour, the too little attention to form. Owing to this, it has gained somewhat in the powers of attraction, but lost in those of expression. Painting with us has as yet taken the lead, while Sculpture has been comparatively subordinate; and as a natural consequence, the former has never risen to its highest powers; for whenever Sculpture holds its proper rank, it tends to elevate its sister art, by imparting to it its more severe principles, and purifying it from the vulgarities



that otherwise creep in; whereas, where Painting is the most prominent, it is apt, by disregarding those principles, to loosen its hold on the higher qualifications, and run astray after those inferior excellences, to which, from being less restricted in its means and purposes, it is apt to cling. This is shown in the ancient Greek and Roman schools, and the mediæval Italian one, in all of which Sculpture held its due position, and the highest aims of Art were accomplished; and in the contrary direction by the Dutch and Flemish schools, where Sculpture and even Architecture were positively debased by being made subservient to painting; and where the latter (painting) chose for itself a more humble walk, contented to excel in secondary, instead of primary qualities.

In saying that colour instead of form has been too much the prevailing excellence of English Art, there is no wish to depreciate the charm of the former. The only thing to be condemned is, in reality, the laying too much stress upon its value, and the making it the ultimatum instead of a means for a higher purpose. Let us try what form and colour have the power of expressing when separated from each other, and we shall then find their relative value in Art. Colour, by itself, will convey general ideas; it is brilliant or sombre, gay or sad, agreeable or otherwise, according as it affects the organ of sight. By certain arrangements of colour, one with another, a pleasing harmony or the reverse is produced, just in the same manner as a certain arrangement of

sounds produces harmony or discord in music ; but neither colour nor music can of themselves convey to the eye or ear more than general or indefinite notions or impressions ; it is only when the one is allied with form, and the other with language, that distinct ideas are brought forth ; whereas by form or outline alone, unassisted by anything else, can be expressed almost all that Art is capable of, whether it be the imitation of physical shapes, the indication of intellectual thoughts, or the depicting the passions or feelings. This undue partiality for colour in the English school is, perhaps, even at this moment, remedying itself ; and were the Great Exhibition to perfect only this reform in Art, it would accomplish a great purpose. It seems, indeed, as if the Royal Commissioners had had something of the kind in view, for they have essentially, if not wholly, rejected Paintings from the Crystal Palace ; and have brought forward Sculpture much more prominently than it has ever yet been. They have, in fact, advocated all throughout an increased attention to purity of form, both in the Fine Arts section itself, and in those decorative and ornamental manufactures to which it is so closely related. The origin of this love of colour, or rather this neglect of form,—for that is the real error,—is to be found in the circumstance that Rubens and Vandyke were the first men who gave, in this country, a strong impetus to Painting. From them we may date the first symptoms of vitality in the Fine Arts of England ; and their surpassing strength in colour is

too well known to need a comment. We imported the works of other great masters, but these two came amongst us themselves and inoculated us with the virus of their artistic style. In Holbein, who preceded them, we find no traces of this preponderance of colour; with him hard outline served as the medium of expression, and colour was but a helper to that medium. It would be absurd to compare the merits of Holbein with Vandyke or Rubens; but it may be a question whether, if we had pursued Art onward in the path he trod, we should not now have stood in a better position than we do. Everyone knows that from the time of Charles I. the Fine Arts fell gradually into decay in this country. The troubles in which England was involved under the Stuarts no doubt contributed in a main degree to this effect; but we will leave it as a question of speculation, whether what we have just alluded to may not in some degree have helped the falling off. It will not be worth while, however, in this slight sketch to trace their decline through the latter reigns of the Stuarts, and the first few of the present royal family. It will suffice to say that during those periods they arrived, taking into consideration the already advanced state of society, at their lowest ebb. To George III. may be ascribed the title of the Father of British Art: by him, as is well known, was founded the Royal Academy, and with the birth of that institution commences, not only the regular history of British Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, but also a genera-



uplifting of those Arts, and a gradual recognition of them amongst us. That monarch found, it is true, genius already existing; but it was struggling on without rule; wasting its powers in endeavouring to accomplish ends that were unattainable, and worthless if even they could have been attained. Sculpture in particular had wandered completely away from its proper path; as witness the monstrosities with which our churches were at that time encumbered. Architecture, it is true, was in a somewhat better position, for it had not long since seen the days of its great man, Wren; but it was still, like the other arts, oscillating from one style to another, for want of rules to guide it; for lack of academies to promulgate its principles. Painting showed signs of vigour, but it was also throwing away its energies on minor departments, for want of encouragement in those walks from which it derives its greatest power. As the section of the Fine Arts of the Great Exhibition does not, properly speaking, include Painting in the highest and most generally understood meaning of the word, it will not be necessary to trace the progress of that Art from the commencement of the Royal Academy to the present period. Of the various phases which Painting assumes, when it diverges from its regular course, and connects itself with other Arts, such as stained glass, the colouring of the ornamental part of our manufactures, we shall have to speak hereafter: it will serve the present purpose better to follow the changes that Sculpture has undergone in its

progress to the state it is now in: and this will be best effected by commenting on the styles or manners of those sculptors, who have successively taken the lead during the period we are speaking of; and their different excellences, as well as faults, will serve to illustrate the changes that took place with regard to the Art itself.

The first regeneration of Sculpture, from the state of chaos into which it had previously fallen, is indicated by the works of Roubiliac, a man of high genius and great knowledge, who existed a little previous to the time we are speaking of. His works are replete with original character, but wanting in that sobriety of manner which distinguished the great masters of old, and made their works so esteemed. A Frenchman by birth, he carried the characteristic energy, and not a little of the foppiness of that nation into his productions. Guided solely by his own genius, and unrestrained by the influence of academic rules, his Sculpture is full of vigour, and not less full of vicious mannerism. In execution, in power of hand, he surpassed all his brethren before or since; but lacking somewhat the judgment when to restrain the chisel, all he did has, in consequence, an air of being over laboured, frittered into small parts, of being made meagre by too frequent re-touchings.

The next sculptor worth mentioning is the elder Bacon, one of the early members of the academy, whose manner forms an intermediate link between Roubiliac and a still later date; with the same over-love for

entire, he shows more submission and attention to those prescribed rules by which Art learns to be guided as she advances in experience. Profuse in his style, he seems to have worked with enthusiasm upon the huge allegorical monuments which were then the prevailing fashion, but which are now entirely out of repute; and showed no little talent in uniting, in a picturesque manner, the multitude of figures of which they were composed. The severity of the ancient Greek Sculpture was at that time comparatively unknown in this country; artists caught occasional glimpses of it when travelling abroad, or through casts in the rooms of the Academy; but they had not as yet learnt to imbue their productions with the grave and simple spirit of those old remains. It was left for Banks and Flaxman to bring into the English school the highest of all qualities. The former of these men, though one of the purest and best sculptors of which England can boast, died, we are sorry to say, comparatively neglected; and left behind him consequently but few productions to support his reputation. The latter immortal man was unfortunately too weak, bodily, to add even a fair share of the powers of the hand to the splendid conceptions which emanated from his mind; he is safe, however; for while the sublime and imaginative, the beautiful and pathetic, are valued in Art, the name of Flaxman will never perish. Pure as is the style of his works, his character as a man was equally pure; while what he has left us in Art may be quoted as instances of

c



the highest purposes aimed at, and in a great measure accomplished, his example as a man will also be quoted as an instance of the union of the finest moral and religious with the highest intellectual qualities; and as showing the heightening effect which the association with noble ideas, the contemplation and study of the sublime and beautiful, has upon us. His days were spent in illustrating in marble those parables of Scripture, which inculcate good-will and charity, and which he so loved; and when his mind was thoroughly imbued with their power and beauty, he went forth in the evening among the poor and needy, to illustrate in another way the lessons he had learnt from them, and which his profession had taught him the more to reverence. Were an argument wanting to prove the worth of the Arts as teachers of mankind, or that their tendency is in every way good, the life of Flaxman might serve to give a strong, indeed an almost unanswerable one.

At this period Sculpture seems to have again undergone an important change; both Bacon, and afterwards Flaxman, had dealt largely and liberally with the allegories of the ancients, and endeavoured to derive from them a language suitable to the purposes of modern times. Some of the absurdities, committed not so much by these men as by lesser ones, who were their contemporaries, caused, from time to time, a shrug indicative of fear, lest what had been intended for poetry might be looked upon as bathos. A thought seemed passing

through the public mind that Art, in being allegorical, had not always become intelligible ; a more sedate view of matters seemed growing into vogue, a greater respect for facts, a treatment more common-place, perhaps, but less deviating from what sober judgment might approve of. Poetical or imaginative Sculpture, which had never been in high demand except for monumental purposes, fell into disrepute ; Portrait Sculpture, to a certain extent, took the place of the other in public favour. Men were found to excel in this, as in the other branches of the Art, when a call was made for them. Nollekens ventured in his busts, as well as his figures, to depart from the severity of the antique, and copy minutely individual nature, as well as modern costume. Chantrey engrafted on the style of Nollekens greater knowledge of human character, greater mastery over the expression of the human countenance, as well as greater freedom and propriety of treatment in his draperies and modern dresses ; never soaring high into the regions of poetry, nor ever so literal in his ideas ; he managed by his genius, which was ever guided by sound judgment, and by the policy he pursued through life, to gain for himself the public favour to such an extent, as to amount at one time to almost a monopoly. If his works do not quite support the reputation he held in his lifetime, it may be attributed to his want of academical knowledge of the human figure, which sometimes showed itself, and rendered his productions not altogether satisfactory or correct. In his busts,

however, he is unsurpassed, and these alone will serve preserve his fame entire.

The death of Chantrey brought Sculpture, in this country, to a species of crisis, from whence may be dated a new state of affairs, certainly with regard to sculptors themselves, and we think we may say with regard also to their Art. Almost the last of a set of artists, who, though not numerous, had engrossed to themselves the patronage of the public for a considerable number of years, a question seemed to arise at his death, whether, in showering favours so liberally on a few, the patrons of Art had not done injustice to many who had been struggling for fame in comparative obscurity; but who might possibly, with proper encouragement, have displayed as much genius or talent as those who had hitherto completely engaged the eye of the world. It was found that commissions in Art, given upon the strength of high reputation, had not always produced what that reputation warranted the expectation of. It was discovered that the loading of one or two artists with many commissions led, in some instances, at least where avarice was stronger than real love of Art, to thoughtless conceptions and slovenly execution, to a species of Sculpture that may be included under the general name of Art Manufacture, or, we should say, Manufactured Art. A reaction took place: instead of those who were already in the enjoyment of public favour, and in many instances had gained it justly by their talent, a disposition arose to try younger



and unknown artists, to take the chance of success with them, and depend less upon the previous dictum of the public voice. Competition was called in to remedy the evil which monopoly had created: to competition, in its true sense or meaning, no artist can object, unless, indeed, he is conscious that his efforts will not bear comparison with his contemporaries, and that he is holding a position with the public which his talents do not warrant; in theory it is excellent, but, alas! in practice utterly abortive. Were the English public enlightened on the subject of Art, it is just possible that competition might effect good purposes, and that a jury might occasionally be brought together, capable of judging correctly on matters of taste; but before this can take place, a great change must be undergone. Englishmen must become intimate with the theory and principles of Art; its real rudiments must be made an item in education, and take their place with other things taught in our schools; then, and then only, can we expect a generation to spring up, capable of perceiving and appreciating the distinction between good and bad. As it now is, the submitting of artists' works to the decision of juries who have not made Art their study, is worse even than the previous system of monopoly; not that every member of the committees, which chance throws together for the consideration of questions connected with Art, is unqualified for that purpose; it would be strange indeed, if, among the number, some were not found of sufficient perception to enable them to come

to correct decisions, but the experience of these very men teaches them, that they have to contend with the ignorance or indifference of their fellow jurors, and that their own knowledge and wish to promote talent is insufficient to withstand it. Where, too, a large majority of jurors are either ignorant or indifferent on the question of comparative excellence, it is easy for the influence of private friendship or personal partiality to creep in, as it is but too apt to do. That this has been the character of nearly all English juries of taste, no artist will, in his own mind deny, though those who have profited by the system may not care openly to avow it. The result is but too evident: works have been, in nine cases out of ten, entrusted to this one or that one, not in consequence of the superiority of his talent, but owing to indirect or personal interest. While Art in general, and Sculpture in particular, has been advancing, our public memorials have shown symptoms of a serious decline in quality; in fact, are examples, not of the best artists of the day, but of inferior ones, often of the very lowest. Foreigners, who visit our public places, and, who are not aware of the extent to which this system has been carried, will have some difficulty in believing an assertion that the Arts are progressing here. In comparing the statues lately put up with those erected thirty or forty years back, they can but perceive, if they be at all judges of the matter, a visible falling off. It will be in vain to try and persuade them that they form no fair or average specimen of the

ability of the country, for they naturally expect that the best works are intrusted to the best artists; and argue to themselves that, if now and then one has proved a failure, at least the mass of them altogether represent the artistic knowledge and power that exists amongst us. In the National Gallery, the place, above all others, where we should expect the character of English Art to be carefully watched and fully vindicated, this error will be found strongly illustrated. On the one side of the hall is a statue, erected within the last few years, of our great painter, Wilkie; the cost raised by subscription from among his admirers, or rather among his British admirers, for his fame is European. The Sculptor was liberally paid, and selected by so called competition. The statue is without a redeeming point; neither resemblance to the original, nor artistic treatment, are to be found in it; it is, in fact, contemptible: on the other side is a small work of earlier date, by Bankes, which any age or country might well be proud of. It appears, by the inscription, that it lay for years in the artist's studio, until at last, in order to secure for it a safe retreat, the sister or niece of the Sculptor—we forget which—presented it to the public, and obtained for it a permanent asylum, where it now is. Were it permitted to comment on the works of living artists, what is here asserted might be corroborated by numerous examples of the same results, arising from the same causes, but propriety forbids; we must therefore content ourselves with hoping that the few hints here



given may lead others to see the evil, and that they may try to remedy it.

In this slight sketch of the state of English Art, some of the causes that have tended to retard the growth of excellence are given ; but the old saying of playing the part of Hamlet with the character of the Prince omitted, has been illustrated. No allusion has been made to that which affected it in a greater degree than aught else before named—the Reformation. Among the many blessings that have accrued to us as a nation from this great event—and they cannot be too highly valued—that of benefit to the Fine Arts cannot be said to be one ; on the contrary, it formed the severest check they could possibly receive. the use to which the Arts were turned by the Roman Catholics, when in power, creating, when the abuses of that church were corrected, a prejudice against them, which has scarcely yet entirely subsided. It separated Art from our sacred edifices, and made it merely a decorator of our private residences ; not only this, it deprived it in a great degree of those subjects, the treating of which served in other countries to foster the highest styles. In Sculpture, this was in a measure made good by the monumental purposes to which that Art is applied ; but it for a long time reduced painting to the displaying its efforts in portraiture, landscape, or at the best in dramatic or historical works on a small scale ; besides this, it caused the total neglect of many other kinds of Art, which had been promoted for the purposes of religious worship under the

old Papal dominion, but which the more simple services of the reformed church no longer required. The object in this chapter has been to explain generally the circumstances under which English Art has had to work, preparatory to a comparison between it and Foreign Art, as exhibited at the Crystal Palace. British Art is dependent on private support; and, while no system of government patronage exists among us, it would be unjust to expect the carrying out of it on a large scale. In all its branches, whether of Painting or Sculpture, whether decorative, or otherwise, it is obliged to suit its style, and modify its ideas to the circumstances as well as the taste of its patrons. This, however, is not all loss to it; on the contrary, where Art derives its support, as it does in England, from various unconnected quarters, instead of from an organised government support, it gains from that very circumstance a variety that increases its charm, and adds to its value; it is saved from a monotony of manner, and is allowed to grow in natural and unrestrained vigour, bringing forth its fruit after its own kind, and it retains a distinct character, which, if not the very strongest, is at all times true to its mistress Nature, and unaffected by the hothouse training of systematic patronage.

It may be thought that in pointing out the drawbacks which English Art has had to contend with, we are endeavouring to make excuses for a pre-supposed inferiority to Foreign Art. So far from this, however, we trust to show that it is in many respects more worthy of attention

than the English public, who are too apt to be caught with what is foreign, are disposed to admit; and even were it inferior, the fault could not be justly placed to the want of ability in the British artist. It would lie rather at the door of those who should have fostered its powers, but who, alas! in too many instances, have turned their back upon it, seeking and fancying they have found excellence everywhere, except in their native land. That the Arts belong to particular countries, and cannot be cultivated except in certain climates, is a prejudice too obsolete to require repudiating; the cause of their success in some parts, and of their failure in others, is now better understood. The intellectual faculties of nations are nearer alike than is generally acknowledged; that they are modified to a certain extent by climate there can be no doubt; but to suppose that one country is more capable than another of excelling in Art, or of putting forth its energies in a particular direction, is a fallacy which no thinking mind will long retain. The difference in excellence arises in Art, as it does in everything else, from the circumstance that more patronage has been given to it in one place than another; that the public attention has been more directed to it; that the people, from some circumstances connected with either their history or religion, their habits, or their feelings, have been led to give it more constant and liberal encouragement. Wherever a call has been made for the Arts in any civilized country, that call has created the ability for them. History, whe-



ther ancient or modern, tends to show this, and experience helps to prove it ; for genius, though proverbially a gift, is, like all else allotted for our use, capable of being cultivated by education, and developed to the furtherance of great ends and purposes ; or stunted by neglect, until its powers are weakened, its faculties deadened, and the object for which it was intended lost.

## CHAPTER THIRD.

---

### SCULPTURE.

---

CONSIDERABLE discussion took place in the public mind, previous to the opening of the Crystal Palace, upon the propriety of introducing Sculpture, or what is termed High Art, into an exhibition, professedly devoted to the advancement of our manufactures. A moment's thought, however, will show, that in an undertaking, one of the chief objects of which was the improvement of our taste, it would have been absurd to have omitted an art, in which its principles are carried out to the greatest possible extent, and for the accomplishment of the highest possible ends; and that embodies within itself, in a greater degree than all others, those rules of beauty by which all manufactures must, more or less, be guided; it, in fact, would have rendered the display deficient in a first and most important feature, and defective for all purposes of comparison. Let us consider awhile the rules by which Sculpture is guided, the means it has in its power, and the limits by which it is restricted, as well as the object

It legitimately aims at ; a proper discussion of these questions will tend to obtain for us a fair appreciation of the art, and a correct reading of its language ; and help us to a just verdict on the merits or demerits of individual examples. Simple as are these points, it is not less curious than true that the mass of the English public have never given them a thought ; and, through ignorance of them, their judgments are in many, if not most cases, totally incorrect. By their judgment we mean the opinion expressed, and remarks made at the first impulse. Time, it is true, always corrects these first impressions if wrong, or confirms them if they happen to be correct, so that the evil of a false outcry rests only for a day ; for the final decision on all questions of Art is eventually given by the few really conversant with it, who have, in most cases, first to fight in a minority against the public voice, but who, generally, after a time, find themselves masters of the field of discussion.

It may be necessary in some cases to illustrate the theory we wish to lay down, by reference to examples in the Exhibition ; and it may be as well, therefore, at once to state that, where for that purpose we can speak in terms of praise, we shall do so freely, for from commendation, given in sincerity, and with a view to the improvement and right understanding of a profession, no evil can arise to any properly-constituted mind ; but, where the remarks are rather of a depreciative character, we shall avoid, as far as possible, alluding, for the sake of illustration, to the



works of any artist; the object of a treatise of this kind, in fact of criticism in general, being rather, we deem, to teach the public rightly how to think and judge, than to give pain to those who have laboured hard, though it may be in the wrong path, to do their best according to the power and talent that is within them. Should the reader, however, apply our remarks to particular cases, and feel that they weigh heavily upon much that he has hitherto heard praised, and thought worthy of commendation, the application, be it understood, is his, not ours.

Sculpture may be simply defined as the art of conveying ideas by means of form; its object is generally considered to be imitation; but properly speaking, its aim or purpose may be defined as suggestive, rather than imitative, so far from imitation being its ulterior aim or purpose, it is only one of the means it uses to work out its intentions. Sculpture attempts in no way to deceive the eye; it, in fact, rejects many things which, were that its object, would tend much to accomplish it. Colour, for instance, that would render it a much nearer approach to nature than it is, has, by the general consent of ages, been excluded from it. It is true that in the best days of the Art colour was used, and there are even now persons who venture to advocate the re-adoption of it; still, it is but fair, finding it, as we do, thrown aside for so long a time, to infer that its rejection has arisen from a general feeling of the utility or impropriety of it; from a more mature consideration of the real capabilities and purposes of Sculpture.

and consequent understanding that colour does not in any degree contribute towards them. No one, in looking at the celebrated antique statues, is for a moment deceived into the idea that he is really gazing at a living being; he neither expects it to move nor speak; on the contrary, his mind is directed to a higher train of thought. The Apollo Belvidere is like nothing that we have ever seen or met with in Nature; it is only so far like her, that it in no way offends us as a physical impossibility. Such extracts or selections from the human form are taken in it only as serve to give a perfect semblance to youthful godlike beauty; as help to embody the subdued self-dependent energy of one to whom all things are alike easy; who has only to will, and to accomplish. The sculptor has omitted in it all that is irrelevant to the one expression he has wished to convey; and the absence of a too servile or literal imitation of nature spiritualizes the form, lifts it into the supernatural, keeps the spectator at a respectful distance, and separates him from it as far as man is from God. Take, for example, again the magnificent group of the Niobe. Does the eye delight in any remarkable or curious approximation to life? does the beholder of it find his senses deceived, and seek to know how this is accomplished? Every part is true to nature, but it is only so true as to leave the thoughts free from any impression to the contrary. Beautiful it is in all its parts, for without beauty it would neither attract us towards it, nor gain for itself our permanent regard and consideration; but the

lesson which the sculptor has intended to convey in it is of a high and instructive kind; the object for which he has wrought has been to create within us deep sympathising sorrow for the awful trial experienced by the strongest of all human feelings, maternal affection. If he have succeeded in this—and who will deny it?—he has aimed at, and attained, one of the highest purposes of Sculpture; one that commands for the Art the public respect, and that entitles it to be classed among the instructors of mankind. See again what thoughts the noble statue of the Dying Gladiator suggested to the imaginative mind of a poet, who, in spite of what he himself has said to the contrary, knew well how to appreciate Sculpture—

“ I see before me the Gladiator lie :

He leans upon his hand—his manly brow  
Consents to death, but conquers agony,  
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—  
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow,  
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now  
The arena swims around him—he is gone,  
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch  
who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes  
Were with his heart, and that was far away;  
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,  
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay  
There were his young barbarians all at play.  
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire.



Dutcher'd to make a Roman holiday—  
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire  
And unavenged?—Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!"

BYRON.

In taking this view of Sculpture—namely, that its ultimate aim is to suggest high and inspiring thoughts, or to impress us with feelings morally or religiously beneficial—it may be said that we are overlooking those physical beauties, ever to be found in the best works, and which are the result of long labour and careful study of Nature, the effect of profound knowledge combined with the most refined taste; it may be urged that we are undervaluing some of those qualities which have rendered the antique Sculpture so celebrated. On the contrary, without them no work of Art can be successful. Proper selection and just combination of forms, acute perception, and delicate feeling for elegance of line, are necessary in Sculpture, in the same manner as appropriate and expressive words are necessary in writing, to carry out forcibly a noble idea. In this, Literature and Art resemble each other; but in this lies also one of the chief differences between them. In the former, when the idea has arisen, the language to convey it comes almost naturally; if not altogether without effort, at least without great study or consideration; while, in the latter, whatever may be the grandeur or beauty of the original thought or conception, the artist has to labour hard, before he can make himself master of the means whereby properly to express it; he

D

has not only to obtain for himself by practice the power of imitating with his hand the impressions which his eye receives—in itself a difficult task—but he has, moreover to make himself acquainted with the anatomical construction of the human form ; that, while he sees, he may at the same time understand' the almost innumerable changes that take place within it ; and he has again to study intently the physiology of nature, in order to be able to distinguish and select from her such phases as are most characteristic and appropriate for his intended work. When the sculptor has gained this knowledge and power of imitation, he may be said to have learned the language in which he has to speak ; then, if he have but genius, he will not fail to give the impress of it to his work ; and convert the cold, passionless mass of his material into a tangible and ostensible thought ; but if he have it not, however great may have been his industry, however deep his knowledge, however correct his power of imitation—nay, however just within themselves may be his selection of forms—his effort will amount only to a cold correct work of talent : if, when he has learned all this, he has no new thought to portray, no idea to convey that will give pleasure higher than the mere gratification of sight—if he have no lesson to teach us, from which we can learn to be either better or wiser, he can scarcely hope that his works will eventually be ranked among the productions of genius, but must be contented to find himself with those who, at the best, are but translators or repeaters.

of ideas already established ; multipliers of recognised attitudes ; treaders in the footsteps of predecessors whose impress has been of a broader and stronger kind.

The difference before alluded to between Literature and Art may serve as an argument to show why the former generally precedes the latter in the history of nations. Literature being chiefly, if not wholly, a matter of inspiration, often springs up among them without any very apparent cause, rising to its highest point in ages not the most advanced in civilization, and dying away again from reasons equally obscure. Art, however, being more a matter of cultivation, is dependent for its advancement on the encouragement it receives ; its rise is consequently slower, and it gains the apex of its ambition in times when the public have learnt to give it their attention, and impart to it the fostering hand of patronage.

The object in setting up this high standard of measurement for Sculpture has not been to confine the Art to a particular walk. From this no good could arise ; but rather to point out its highest aim, and enable the reader to distinguish between a work of real genius, and one of mere talent, that he may appreciate the difference between them. The principle will apply, with some modifications, to almost all the different grades of the Art. A portrait-statue or bust, is valuable often from its association with those we love or respect ; if it be, however, but a literal translation of the face or figure, it must be reckoned as a work of talent only, and it does not rank higher, even



supposing the parts are gracefully arranged, and tastefully modelled ; but if, while satisfying us as a physical resemblance, it indicate at the same time by its expression, the mental qualifications of the original ; if it suggest by its treatment intellectual power and inward communing with the thoughts, if its air and manner be such as to connect it with what is noble and commanding, it then rises into a work of real genius, and may lay claim to its rightful position as such.

We have endeavoured to show that Sculpture owes much of its power, or charm, to association ; that its real value, setting aside the beauties of workmanship, depends upon the train of thought it suggests ; that if this be of the right kind, the sculptor has understood his Art, and applied it to its proper purpose. It often happens, however, that artists waste great talent in endeavouring to carry out to the utmost, ideas the very reverse of this, not merely inoffensive, or meretricious, but positively vicious and lowering in their character. In these cases the effect is of course the more annoying, just in proportion to the power displayed. Illustrations of this may unfortunately be found in the Great Exhibition ; and, but for the resolution taken to mention the name of no one for the purpose of censure, we should deem it our duty to animadvert upon them ; the vice, however, is confined to two or three specimens, and the English school, we are proud to say, is entirely free from it.

There is another kind of deviation from the right

work, by no means, however, to be classed with the above, for it does not amount to a vice, but simply to an error in judgment; if it do not tend to lead us astray, it at any rate prevents any good arising from the labour and talent of the artist. It is when an attempt is made to depict that which is suggestive of unhappy thoughts, when the work, instead of appealing to our better feelings or sympathies, does the reverse, and brings up before us recollections or associations we would naturally wish to avoid, when it takes what is commonly called an ill-natured view of humanity. Let us, in illustration of this, suppose the sculptor to have for his subject, "Childhood," one capable of many beautiful versions, and that finds its appeal readily answered by all. If he so treat it as to portray its innocence, or simplicity, its loveliness, its joyousness, its amiability or affection, he then brings before us childhood in its most attractive and endearing form; his work then speaks to us in language we love to hear, and we are ever willing and ready to reward him for his labour, by bestowing upon his production some of that fondness which we naturally feel towards what it so brightly reflects; but if, on the contrary, he so treat it as to call up before us the fretful peevishness belonging to that period of life—if his work depict to us the wanton destructiveness and wearying effects of temper, which in reality require the strong exertion of patience and affection to bear with and excuse, we naturally turn from it to other and more pleasing thoughts; and no skilfulness displayed by

the chisel, or aptitude of expression, will quite reconcile us to it; the sculptor mistakes his path, and the ingenuity of his workmanship only leads him farther in the wrong direction.

One word more on those errors of judgment, or misconceptions in design, which in Art render abortive, efforts that would otherwise prove effective, and we may then pass on to another branch of the subject. A thought may be sublime or beautiful, when invested in the mysterious garb of poetry; a fact may be truthful to nature and full of endearing sentiment, when described in the indefinite language of words, which only touches on such parts as are sufficient for its purpose, and leaves the rest to be supplied by the imagination; but when that thought is translated literally into marble, when that fact is brought positively and substantially before the sight, it is often found to be of such a nature as to become absurd—nay more, it may prove offensive, by being deprived of its indistinctness, its ideality may be lost, and that halo of poetry which surrounded it as with a veil, may fall away leaving its shape too clearly visible for mental contemplation or enjoyment. Examples of this, but which we shall no further allude to, may also be found at the Crystal Palace, clearly proving how necessary is sound judgment to curb the mind, even in the production of works of an ideal nature, and how comparatively fruitless is the schooling of an artist in the manual dexterity of his profession, if his mind be not equally schooled in the power



of reasoning. In artistic design, imagination and judgment must go hand-in-hand together, otherwise the one will wander into insanity, or the other degenerate into expressionless insipidity.

It is not our intention, in this treatise, to enter largely into discussion on the subject of beauty or grace, ingredients necessary in all good works of Art. So much has been already said on them by Burke and other eminent writers, that it would be hopeless to expect to add aught to the very ample delineations of them already given. By beauty in Art is meant, of course, not merely beauty in its limited sense, as applied to woman, but in its wider and more comprehensive one, as expressing abstract perfection of form, and that complete fitness to purpose, ever found in the works of nature generally, though not always carried out by her to its utmost extent in individual examples. Though we all feel and estimate beauty, it is difficult to give any very accurate definition of it; the expression, "fitness to purpose," is not novel, and though well understood, by no means comprehends an entire or complete explanation of the term; for though in nature adaptation to purpose and beauty are so combined, that the carrying out of the one to perfection often involves the complete presence of the other, yet the lower orders of creation have forms thoroughly suited to their capacities, the perfection of which by no means conveys a pleasurable sensation to the eye. As beauty, however, is at the best but a question of comparison, dependent much on

the power of receiving impressions, it may be urged that these are not exactly exceptions to the rule, but are to be measured by a scale too low to be appreciated by the human eye, yet not so low but that they may afford gratification to more confined faculties.

Beauty, as applied to the lower orders of beings, is of a more limited kind than when applied to man: the purposes for which they are created, the destinies which they are called on to fulfil, the sphere they have to move in, being more restricted; certain qualifications or faculties, suitable to the tasks they have to perform, and adapted to their wants, are therefore found in them in such force or perfection as to predominate over all others, and to become in the animal itself the essence of its existence. Strength, fleetness, keenness of sight or scent, courage or caution, capability of bearing fatigue or of suffering deprivation, the power of moving with facility in particular elements, the adaptation of outward form and surface, as well as inward construction, to life and enjoyment in certain climates and under peculiar influences. The beauty of man, partaking as he does in a degree of all the physical qualifications, which each portion of the lower orders possesses singly, and as having superadded to them the superior one, reason, is of a higher and more complicated kind. In him is found that concentrated essence of form, in which the highest powers of body and mind are comprised within the least possible dimensions. To the representation of man, therefore, the sculptor

naturally turns, as affording him the widest sphere for his Art, and as enabling him to carry out its intentions in the highest degree; and it follows that the perfect representation of perfect human form is the most difficult task he has to execute, containing, as it does, beauty in its purest and most elevated character.

By the study of the human structure, and by comparison of it with those animals which possess in a high degree the single qualifications so happily concentrated therein, the sculptor is enabled to decipher its laws and principles, and so select from imperfect individual instances those phases, which, when united and separated from extraneous matter, constitute perfect beauty, or thorough fitness of purpose.

Though beauty in the brute creation is of a much lower standard than in man, the approach to that standard in them is more complete, they are less liable to those deformities or weaknesses, caused by aberrations from appointed duties, and neglect of faculties allotted to them, being confined by instinct within natural boundaries, from which they feel neither the desire nor the power to depart. Man, however, being the inhabitant of all portions of the globe, is in the first place affected, and often deteriorated in his physical form as well as his mental characteristics, by climate; he is furthermore the prey to his passions, which lead him to excess in many ways, that tend to the destruction of bodily no less than mental beauty; the various employments in which he is engaged, and the



multitudinous circumstances by which he is influenced in his complicated and artificial mode of life, all help to detract from the thorough carrying out of perfect form in him; even the excess of his mental energies, in some degree antagonistic to his bodily ones, create, when carried to excess, comparative deformity, by causing an over-preponderance of the brain, the organ of thought, and an increased development of the features, its visible index.

Owing to the numerous properties united in the human frame, it becomes almost an impossibility to portray in Art that concentrated essence of them, in which might be supposed to consist perfection; many of them being opposites would nullify each other, when combined in equal degrees in one form. The ancient Greeks seem to have thoroughly felt this in their statues, and to have followed accordingly the example of their theology, and given separate representations of each. The beauty of the Apollo is one, the beauty of the Discobolon is another. The beauty of the Hercules is that of strength, and is incapable of being united with that of the Paris, for amalgamation of the two in anything like equal proportions would only weaken both. Though the Hercules is the perfection of strength, it is by no means without elegance, but the elegance is secondary to that predominant feature. It has something, too, of the brow of Jove, as belonging to his son, but this is likewise subservient to the extraordinary muscular development which is the primary

feature of the work. The beauty of the Venus, with its graceful and voluptuous undulation of line, is perfect in itself; yet of a totally separate kind from the severely chaste one of the Minerva, or the commanding matronly one of Juno. Even the expressions used by their poets in describing their personal charms are of an opposite nature: "blue-eyed daughter of Jove," "ox-eyed Juno," are terms each compatible only with the beauty of the one to which it is applied.

Grace may be described as that appropriate action or manner which displays beauty in its fullest degree, removing from it all that is opposed to the impression it should make. Animals are at all times graceful in their different degrees, because their motions are perfectly unrestrained, and exactly suited to the occasion; but in man grace is dependent upon an inward restraining or governing of the body by the mind, which, guided by a certain inherent sense of the beautiful, prevents in it the occurrence of awkward movements, positions, or attitudes, and imparts to it at the same time the impression of its own inward sentiments or feelings; so it is with works of Art, whether considered as to their design or execution. An expression may be carried out in Sculpture so as to be thoroughly intelligible, a story may be told with force, but if the means be not judiciously chosen, the attitudes pleasing as well as effective, the artist has not properly used the powers of his Art; he has only copied, not selected.

Grace, as applied to execution, implies elegant variety

of line, tasteful selection and judicious subordination of parts, delicate finish and appropriate workmanship corresponding in its style with the object of the entire design, and aiding it in its effect.

Affectation is a false grace particularly to be avoided in Sculpture, and arises from the action of the figure emanating, not purely from involuntary emotion of the heart, or from extraneous impulse, but from a vain desire to display the beauties of its form. The movements caused by affectation are generally exaggerations of those lines of grace, created by motions arising from natural influences. Dancing, so far as it springs from joy and mirth, and exhibits the effect of a flow of spirits, is graceful (we speak as artists), but when studied for the display of the figure, it becomes affectation.

Theatrical is a term applied to works of art, when the expression is too powerful for the cause from which it is derived, or the action too violent for its intended purpose, when the figure or group appears anxious to display to others its action or emotion. Whenever strong feeling or powerful movement is portrayed in Sculpture, the cause must be clearly defined, and be of corresponding strength; or, we should say, be of still greater strength; for the outward evidence of feeling as shown in the features and limbs, is but the last vibration from a shock, received in a system passively resistant, and, like the rippling rings in the water, must be weaker the further it recedes from its central or primary disturber.



We have pointed out what should be the main aim or purport of Sculpture—let us now consider its means and limits. Sculpture being the Art of conveying ideas by means of form only, must of necessity reject, as irrelevant or inexpressive, all those objects whose chief charm or power is derived from that other main ingredient in nature, colour. Not only this; it must so select and arrange its lines or forms, that they shall tell thoroughly to their purpose unaided by it; and this power in them is gained, not by servile imitation, but by a study of their principles. In nature the two, form and colour, are blended together to carry out one purpose; but the latter is often so predominant over the former, that the eye becomes satisfied with the impression received from it alone, making no inquiry beyond. This is strongly illustrated in the plumage of birds, and the colour of insects or flowers, whose brilliancy is such, as almost to obliterate from the mind the remembrance of their shapes. Sculpture, however, has but one of these means in her power, and to this one she must apply all the force she can, to accomplish what in nature is effected by the two combined.

In looking at Nature, the eye never questions the correctness or possibility of any of her forms. Reason satisfies us, without effort, of their truth, if not always of their beauty; where the mind can see and comprehend the position or action of a part, it takes the rest for granted, and acknowledges at once the presence of the whole. Not so, how-

ever, in Art; here the eye, conscious that it is looking on the work of human hands, liable to error, becomes suspicious, and everything must in consequence be so defined as to leave little or nothing to imagination, and satisfy it, not only of the completeness as a whole, but of the proper proportion of each distinct part.

Lines and forms, the medium through which Sculpture works, have certain meanings attached to them, even in their most simple and primitive character, dependent, perhaps, upon the laws of gravitation. Thus, a perpendicular line is expressive of life or fixedness; a horizontal one of sleep or death; a diagonal one of action or volition. Hogarth was the first to define the serpentine line as the one of grace, from its partaking, perhaps, of some portion of all the other three; and from the pleasurable sensation the eye experiences in travelling undisturbed along its ever-varying, and gently-changing surface. Among serpentine lines, those which undulate slightly, departing but little from the straight line, are indicative of easy and elegant motion; while tortuous or angular ones betray strong and powerful, quick and animated action. Parallel or straight lines, from the sameness of sensation produced, have a tendency to create weariness, unless interrupted by stops or resting places, on which the eye can pause in its otherwise monotonous course: while sharp rectangular ones are apt to offend, from the sudden exertion, necessary in the visual organ, to enable it to alter abruptly its direction. Forms have again their

meaning, derived from the same laws. The pyramid or cone, when standing on its base, impresses the mind with the feeling of firmness or stability; while, when on its apex, it conveys the idea of lightness or instability; and the same, when diagonally placed, expresses swiftness, assuming as it does the shape of the arrow-head, and the general form of all animals whose predominant property is speed. There is in Nature, amidst all her endless variations, a constant approximation to geometrical shapes; that is to say, to shapes, one half of which reflect the other. The world itself is nearly round; no animal in it is created, that cannot be divided into two similar halves. The star in the heavens, by its rays, becomes almost regular in its form; while the star-fish on the shore is guided by the same law; the tree, wild as it appears, shows the same disposition in its growth. The poplar is the elongated oval; the fir the cone. Gather a branch of the myrtle, and every leaf has its opposite; the flowers are made up of parts radiating from a centre, and tending to one simple and nearly geometrical whole. Forms, unmeaning when single, become, when united in the kaleidoscope of nature, pleasing to the eye, as well as regular and geometrical in their character. That positive regularity of form is never attained in nature, is neither a proof of her weakness, nor of the absence of the principle. He, who so made his works that, while each should be subservient to its individual purpose, the whole should be agreeable to the eye of man, was too



wise to do that, which would have destroyed one of their chief charms, variety. This law is not intended to create monotony, but as the key-note for preserving harmony amidst all the music of creation.

The sculptor attends to these rules ; he selects the lines which best express the fixedness or motion, the life or stillness, that he may require ; he arranges his figures or groups in shapes that are in themselves indicative of their character or feeling ; he goes near to regular forms, and so obtains order ; but at the same time takes warning from nature not to spoil variety by too near an approach. Regularity of arrangement, however, is admissible in Sculpture, in a greater degree than it is found in nature. for Sculpture may be said to be the twin-sister to Architecture, being ever found more or less associated with her. Hence, by partaking somewhat of the formality of the latter, she unites herself to a certain extent in sentiment with her ; while, by her greater departure from positive geometrical forms, and her nearer approach to those of nature, she becomes the connecting link between the two. What we have just explained is well illustrated in the antique group of the "Laocoon and Sons;" in which an almost endless variety of tortuous lines expresses the strong action caused by the agony ; while the placing of the two sons, somewhat formally, one on each side of the father, preserves due order amidst all the horrors of the scene.

Sculpture is an Art intended, not merely for the grati-

fication of a day, but for the pleasure and instruction of ages. Everything, therefore, which relates only to the fashion of a moment, or that is in contradiction to the never-changing principles of nature, is in it so much wrong. The ancient Greeks made their figures nude, or partially covered with drapery—not silk, satin, velvet, or cotton, but with drapery, cut neither into coat, waistcoat, nor trousers, but hanging according to the natural laws of gravitation, which regulated its folds then as it does now. The waists of their figures are not short, like those of the last generation, nor long, like the present. No part is unnaturally compressed, or increased beyond its proper proportions. The divisions of the human frame are left where nature intended them to be; man walks forth from their hands as he first walked forth from the hand of his Maker; and so long as his laws remain the same, so long will the reputation of these great works last.

The only legitimate exception to this rule is Portraiture, a species of Sculpture which, while it acknowledges tributary obedience to the general laws of the Art, asserts for itself the right of making regulations of its own, for carrying out more effectually its particular purposes. So much discussion has taken place, and such a variety of opinion exists on this subject, that it may be well to devote a few lines to it. Sculptors, who draw their inferences and rules of Art entirely from ancient examples, contend, that all indications of the dress or manners of the period to which the person represented belongs, should

be obliterated in a portrait-statue; that costume should be thrown aside, and scarcely aught, save the face, be literally transferred from nature to the marble or bronze. This is called idealizing a statue, and idealizing it is, there is no doubt, in one way of speaking; for but little of the individual character of the original enters into the composition. It is, however, a mistaken view of the question; for the primary object in Portraiture, whether in Painting or Sculpture, must be to record, in a pleasing and appropriate manner, the personal resemblance of the original, to hand down to posterity the bodily form, in which is contained those mental powers that make him admired or beloved; to give to the eye permanently that which no history or biography will be able hereafter thoroughly to convey to the imagination. For the accomplishment of this, he must be represented surrounded by those circumstances that mark the time in which he lives, and the employments in which he is engaged. Suppose, for the sake of argument, all portrait-statues to be made after the fashion above alluded to, as they too frequently are, when entrusted to artists who are too bigoted to the ancient practices of their profession, to apply the powers of reason to their works—suppose, we say, all portrait-statues to be made nude, or clothed only with simple drapery, which neither marks age nor country, and that they are at some future period recovered from the ruins of a decayed nation as have been the statues of ancient Greece, with scarcely anything to distinguish them one from another, beyond



perhaps some vague allusions to them found in the works of cotemporary writers ; or, at the best, a stray medal or coin, that appears to bear some faint resemblance to them—what will enable the antiquarian or historian of that future age to distinguish between the representation of a Chaucer, or a Spencer ; a Newton, or a Bacon ; a Shakspeare, or a Milton ; a Pitt, or a Peel ; a Watt, or a Stephenson ? There is, besides, an inherent character in portrait faces, which no ingenious treatment in Sculpture can completely harmonize with that general representation, attempted in what is conventionally called the classical style. By removing the peculiarity of the general form, and depriving the figure of its dress and customary accessories, the individuality of the face becomes more apparent and incongruous. The work, under this sort of treatment, amounts at the best but to a sort of bastard idealization.

It is not intended in this argument to advocate positive, literal copying in matters of costume. A statue is not erected to commemorate the dress, but the man ; it is sufficient, therefore, if the former be so indicated as to give the general impression of belonging to its wearer and his times. Such peculiarities in it as are unimportant, or offensive to good taste, or that detract from the broad treatment of the work, should be omitted or judiciously concealed. An artist of right feeling finds no great difficulty in this, though perhaps nothing serves so much to distinguish his work from that of inferior men as due attention in this particular. There are many kinds of

modern dresses, as well suited to Sculpture as the most simple drapery, such as the robes of our princes and peers, our judges and clergy; and it is rarely that an opportunity is wanting in a statue, of selecting one or other of these. Even the ordinary modern dress, worn in our streets, may by a little modification and treatment, be so approached in marble, as to give a general impression of identity, and yet not be ludicrous or offensive to those who may hereafter have to look at the work, when the fashion shall have changed, or entirely departed. Were a proof wanted that this is the correct method of solving the question, we might quote the opinion of Flaxman, as shown in his works. Though the most imaginative sculptor in England, or perhaps the world, ever produced, his portrait statues are singularly literal; in fact, if they have a fault, it is the too close adhesion to the detail of modern dress, evidently showing, that he felt the sound judgment of not departing from those things that mark identity of person and period. His figure of Sir Joshua Reynolds, in St. Paul's Cathedral, is an instance of judicious choice of costume; and will bear comparison with most works of the English school; and his statue of Pitt is another instance of close attention to this point; notwithstanding which, it is a thoroughly characteristic work, simple and elegant, dignified and statesmanlike.

It is generally felt that good ideal sculptors rarely send forth successful portrait-works. The reason is obvious, though not often inquired into. The general system of

Their training is in opposition to the attainment of the power necessary for producing strongly characteristic likenesses. They are taught in their studies to avoid all that is individual, and to extract beauty from nature, by lifting and selecting from her works that which is general or universal in its application. In ideal works, character, if it is true, must be mixed up with beauty, but that character must be of a general nature, as illustrated by classes; and, as such, is perfectly distinct from that necessarily strong feature in good portraiture—individuality. This individuality the portrait-sculptor, instead of rejecting, has to seize strongly upon, to portray in his statue, and even to increase in power, that it may make a lasting impression on the spectator. This he must do, not by exaggeration of form, manner, attitude, or expression—for that of course would be caricature—but by depicting the person under suitable circumstances, and engaged in employments appropriate to him, and that tend to bring forward his best and most striking expression and attitude. The artist must select, too, from the component parts of individuality, such as are pleasing and to the purpose, and reject such as are otherwise. This is what is vulgarly called flattery; but it is no departure from the truth, otherwise than in not telling the whole of it. The peculiarities, whether personal or mental, are not changed; it is merely that the best only are brought out to view, and the others veiled from the sight, but gently hinted at, or may be, altogether omitted.



It will be easily seen, therefore, that the requisites for success in the two walks of Art, are somewhat different, if not wholly opposed to each other, owing to individual character and abstract beauty being such essentially contradictory qualities, as is shown by the circumstance that the one may be exaggerated and so become caricature, while the other is incapable of being either conceived or represented in excess.

Material must always have a powerful effect in regulating the style or manner of Sculpture, and in limiting its efforts. To the ponderous blocks of syenite and granite, so unmanageable to the workman, we are indebted for many of the peculiarities belonging to Egyptian Art. The beautiful marble of the Greeks, capable of delicate finish, and yet possessing within itself the elements of strength, helped them in a measure to the execution of their light, elegant, and life-like figures. The softer materials employed by the Gothic sculptors of the mediæval ages, obliged them to resort to long draperies and other contrivances, to render their statues durable. A due consideration of the material in which a work is to be executed, is one of the primary studies of the sculptor, and affects his design as well as his execution. An attempt to exceed the limits which that material imposes upon him may be considered, not as a proof of genius, but rather as a misunderstanding of his Art. For instance, if his work be intended for marble, he will endeavour, while he retains the lightness and elegance necessary for

his subject, so to arrange the parts that they shall be durable, and at the same time capable of being, with tolerable facility, carried out in execution. While he attempts the introduction of nothing that cannot be perfectly expressed in such material, he will often strengthen many features of his work, when he wishes them to tell forcibly, even beyond what he is justified by nature, knowing that otherwise their effect must be weak, in consequence of the substance being colourless and semi-transparent. To this, which may be considered as a question partly of light and partly of material, the English sculptors scarcely give due attention: they are accustomed to work their figures and groups in studios where the windows are constructed so as to produce upon them strong decided lights and shades, and the result is, that when they are brought out into the broad open air, their forms are found to be insufficiently defined, the white pellucid marble absorbing and amalgamating the little contrast of light and shade which they receive. The style of touch in the English school is more suited to Painting than to Sculpture, and the general appearance of the surfaces may be compared, criticising them severely, to what, by judges in horse-flesh, is termed "gummy." The foreign sculptors, however, seem to calculate better on the changes of light and shade which their work has to undergo, as well as on the nature of their material; and in this respect are decidedly superior. If the work be intended for bronze, the sculptor is free from fear as

to the fragility of parts, and can proceed without any regard to that circumstance; but he has others connected with his material to influence him; he knows that his statue will eventually be of a dark opaque colour, so dark that often, when standing between the sun and the spectator, little except the marginal outline will be visible: he must therefore so design it, that it shall tell effectively unaided by aught save that outline, the internal details or minutiae becoming comparatively valueless, except so far as they help to make up the boundary line from different points of sight. Many things therefore are forbidden, that would probably in the white marble help to give interest, but which in the dark bronze would detract from that clear definition of form which must always be apparent in every view. Other difficulties, too, meet him, connected with the process of moulding and casting; but as we propose to devote a separate chapter to the mechanical processes of Sculpture, we shall not now touch upon them. The foregoing remarks will, we trust, help sufficiently to an understanding of the theory of Sculpture, the only species of knowledge necessary to the critic and general observer. The practical portion concerns the professional man alone. Of this more anon.

We will now suppose the reader to walk into the building of the Great Exhibition, by the door of the south transept, the principal entrance, and the one from which the grandest *coup d'œil* is caught; we will further suppose him to commence his round on the right hand



side of the said transept, and that he will confine his attention and observation to the Sculpture alone (no easy task when such a plethora of objects present themselves to feast his eye); we may then leave him, trusting that he will freely exercise his judgment, and, as they say in our criminal courts, suffer nothing to bias him, except what is plainly put before him in evidence, by which alone he must be guided in his verdict. Will he not stop before the beautiful spiritualized figure of "Beatrice," by Hancock, and become for a moment as absorbed in expression as is the plaster itself? Can he pass by without pleasurable emotion MacDowell's lovely figure of "Innocence at Prayer," one of the most graceful and effective works in the whole Exhibition? will he draw from the well of memory no association, as he gazes at her earnest upturned face, the very semblance of purity, that will lead him back to times when, as a child, he could address his Maker with the unsullied devotion so forcibly and yet so delicately portrayed in this charming work? Let him look at the beautiful undulating line formed by the action of the figure, and aided so completely by the arrangement of the drapery which flows so naturally and so sweetly, view it from what point you will. MacDowell is an artist whom England may well be proud of; he makes his appeal to our best and noblest feelings; and while he continues to strike the chord of these his reputation is safe. Respecting his "Eve," there may, perhaps, be some slight difference of opinion. The perfect uncon-

sciousness of sin expressed in it disappoints those who unthinkingly expect to find shame-facedness, the sure indication of impurity. But who will deny the arch expression of his figure of "Cupid," among all the representations of the mischievous Deity, the only one which answers thoroughly to the description given of him by the poets? No figure is so charming, so varied in its movements, so graceful in all its views as this. The "Girl at the Spring," by Woodington, one of the most intellectual artists of England, deserves a glance at least for its elegant and original treatment; and then again comes another work by MacDowell, of a different kind from either of the other three, but not less masterly. "Virginius and his Daughter," a fine heroic conception, reminding one, perhaps, somewhat more than could be wished, of a celebrated antique group; but telling its terrific tale in language as vivid and as powerful as Gibbon's or Goldsmith's. How nobly does the energetic action of the maddened father, as he brandishes the knife with which he has already stabbed his daughter, contrast with the lifeless, plumb-like falling of the sacrifice in the cause of virtue! What a picture is there of paternal affection, driven to an act of desperation, to protect his child from worse than death! A moment, and we may fancy we hear the tumultuous rush through the forum, and the cry for vengeance against the tyrant among the crowd. The muscles may, perhaps, be too hardly and mechanically marked in some parts, but to mention this in a work

so nobly felt, so vigorously carried out, and so eminently successful, is hypercriticism.

Bell's "Andromeda" will attract for well-studied modelling, and for the careful finishing of the surface, though its somewhat too heavy form may diminish perhaps slightly its beauty. It may be a question, however, whether it was judicious to give a subject like this to such a hard opaque material as bronze. Female figures in Sculpture gain, more than any others, from the beauty of the substance in which they are worked; and in this instance marble would have shown it to much greater advantage. The ancients seem to have used bronze, either on a very colossal scale for out-door purposes, or on a very diminutive one, where the parts become too small to be durable in other bodies; and to have rarely employed metal for their life-size statues, considering, we presume, that it was better suited to be seen from a distance. The very small specimens, handed down to us, are doubtless parts only of other things of which they formed but the decorations, and must be judged of as such.

Passing along the right-hand side of the eastern nave, towards the foreign department, J. E. Thomas (not the decorator of the House of Lords), demands attention by his colossal model of the Marquis of Bute, intended also for bronze. He seems to understand well the posing of his figure, and to have studied thoroughly the principles of drapery, evidently in the Chantrey school. If picturesque effect were the ultimate aim of Art, we should say he has



attained it. Might we suggest to him, however, a consideration of the remarks previously made with respect to works intended, like his, for metal; and at the same time gently hint, that display is dangerous when carried beyond a certain extent. Nothing is more necessary in Sculpture than the *Ars celare artem*, and it cannot be said to be quite attained in this instance. Mr. Thomas is a man of talent, and may well pardon the remark.

Mr. B. Spence's "Highland Mary" next presents itself with its modest demeanour, and may be said also to be a successful work as far as it pretends, though just a shade too massive in its proportions. Perhaps this effect is increased by its proximity to the late Mr. Wyatt's lovely statue of the nymph "Glycera," for purity of design, delicacy of form, tasteful arrangement of drapery, high-finished workmanship—in fact, for all qualities dependent on high appreciation of female beauty, unsurpassed in the Exhibition. In the enormous building in which it is placed, its size appears somewhat diminished as does the companion nymph, also by him, a work of scarcely inferior merit. Whether England, as the land of his birth, or Rome, as the school in which he was educated, is entitled to take credit to herself for Mr. Wyatt's justly-earned fame, we know not, but it is quite certain that the world of Art has sustained no greater loss than his within the last few years.

M. Jean Du Seigneur's group of "Michael and Satan" displays, particularly in its anatomy, a knowledge and

power of modelling, which we regret to see perverted by injudicious design and treatment. In no respect is the English school so distinguished from the foreign, as in the strict propriety with which its artists treat their subjects. However weak and ineffective may be their power of hand, however deficient they may be in anatomical knowledge, they rarely run into those absurdities of design, which so often offend in other schools, and particularly in the French. The present instance is a painful loss of talent wasted, for want of sound judgment to regulate it. We have some notion that the difference arises from the mental peculiarities of the two nations. The English, deficient in imagination, possess a strong judgment that curbs them in all they do : the French, wanting in a degree the ballast of judgment, have an imagination, which, while it often carries them to great heights, leads them sometimes into incongruities quite irreconcilable with common sense. Art portrays with them greater variety of character, less measured or restricted modes of appeal ; ever seeking new roads to travel in, new means of attracting, she increases the power of her charms by a changefulness of disposition, which may almost be said to coquet with Nature, so fickle and so fanciful is the attention she pays to her. No wonder, therefore, if now and then, in her wanderings after novelty, a mistake like the present occurs, which disturbs our risibility too much for the quiet enjoyment with which Sculpture should always be contemplated. Praise is meant to M. E. Lequesne's

bronze statue of a "Dancing Fawn," when we say it is an excellent antique figure ; for its conception and treatment are so thoroughly antique, that it seems scarcely possible it should belong to the present age. It would serve as an admirable pendent to the celebrated "Dancing Fawn" of the Barbarini palace. M. Lequesne must be an accomplished sculptor to have executed this work ; but he must beware of that very common mistake, too close adhesion to by-gone Art. The principles of the ancient sculptors may be adopted with advantage, but their ideas must not be imitated ; for with them we have now but little sympathy. To deal in their symbols is to use a dead language for the expression of that which, to be useful, should be read by the illiterate as well, as the learned, the tyro as well as the cognoscenti.

M. Lechesne's two groups of "Children and Dogs," show a mastery over animal character and expression scarcely surpassed by our own Landseer, and seldom exercised in Sculpture, which, more haughty than her sister Painting, rarely condescends to depict the lower order of beings, except as accessories to human form. In this instance, however, the animals are by far the most important of the two ; in fact, are the chief actors of the scene. The same is the case with his group of the "Woman and Eagle ;" that which should be primary, is entirely overwhelmed, not only by the preponderance of the bird, so admirably modelled, but by a load of secondary objects of little interest or value. M. Lechesne is wrong as regards



the principles of his Art, but right as regards himself ; for his forte is evidently animal modelling, and it may be well that he should adhere to that which he excels in. These groups attract beyond any other piece of Sculpture in the Exhibition ; for there is in them, independent of the elaborate modelling shown in the dogs, a story of danger, fear, rescue, triumph, fidelity, and affection, which appeals to the coldest heart ; and in this lies the magnet that draws within its influence such crowds of spectators, completely fixing and absorbing their attention, notwithstanding the near presence of works of a much higher calibre in Art.

Before M. Etex' magnificent group of "Cain the Wanderer and his Family," we must pause, and recall what we have defined as the ultimatum or highest aim of Sculpture. We have said that its purpose should be to raise within us high and inspiring thoughts ; to teach lessons, moral or religious, whereby to become better and wiser. We have asserted that beauties dependent on dexterity of hand, though by no means to be despised or neglected, are secondary to the qualities required for this ; that when the first described power is present, it stamps the work as of genius ; but that when the latter only exists, it ranks it merely among the productions of talent. If we be right in this view, Sculpture may lay claim to the title of a high intellectual calling ; if wrong, it sinks at the best into an expensive toy, to gratify the sight, and afford amusement to the idle and luxurious. Let us cast our eyes up at the expression of despair depicted in the

face and figure of the father; the curse of God distinctly stamped, not only on his countenance, but on every limb. Deserted and abandoned by all, except his poor wife and children, on whom he has heaped by his crime such misery, but who yet cling to him to the last; is not the scene of sullen abandonment and utter loneliness positively appalling, its effect increased by being viewed from the midst of a crowd, who, as if in fulfilment of the sentence passed on the murderer himself, scarcely deign more than a glance at the truthful representation of his sufferings? What a lesson is here of the consequence of crime, of the punishment which follows the breaking of God's laws! This is grand Sculpture indeed. We know not whether we may not name it as the highest effort in the entire collection. It is true that some of its forms, especially in the woman and children, might be more beautiful. Attraction is scarcely aimed at; in fact, we are not quite certain that it would not weaken its power; but there is a rough barbarian strength in it, that aids wonderfully its moral, as depicting forcibly that obstinate rebellious spirit, which refused to bow to the decrees of Providence, and as suitable to the parents of a race doomed to labour for existence in the dark bowels of the earth, and on materials as intractable as themselves. M. Etex might set an example to the English school, which it would do well sometimes to follow, though it would scarcely help the artists to obtain remuneration for their labours. The fault is with British patronage, which shows such decided

preference for the beautiful, and so little regard for the sublime; that while our studios and annual exhibitions are inundated by repetitions of Venuses, Cupids, and Psyches, and other personages of a like character, scarcely any instances of the manly style, exhibited in this group, exist among us; and the tendency of this is to create a sickly emasculated manner, enticing, but deficient in equalities, that indicate a vigorous, robust, healthful state of art.

The group of the "Lion in Love" stands next, and fully supports the high reputation of the talented and amiable artist of Brussels. Few sculptors show such devotion to their profession as M. Geefs; and happy must he feel, living under, and esteemed by, a monarch, who is a real lover of the arts, and who glories in fostering the native genius of his country. Everything is wrought out in this work with a care and finish which could emanate alone from a pure unadulterated affection for his calling. The face and we may say the whole figure of the female is lovely; the lines undulate most gracefully, the whole composition is singularly compact, and at the same time pleasing; the only doubt on our mind, and it is but a doubt, is whether M. Geefs has not strayed too far away from probability, even for allegory. The meaning he wishes to convey is evident; but we doubt if the laws of nature, which certainly do not admit of a lion falling in love with a beautiful woman, should be wholly set at defiance. Should not there be consistency even in fable?



Turning away from this, we find ourselves surrounded by a legion of groups, in the midst of which stands M. Simonis' colossal statue of "Godfrey de Bouillon." This, however, we will take the liberty of passing over, as illustrating no part of our theory. Though Burke has defined size or space as one of the component parts of the sublime, it does not follow that a work of art, because it is large, should come under that designation; on the contrary, a truly meritorious one will carry out its purpose almost independent of size. His groups of children are admirably executed, and perfectly true to nature in their attitudes and expressions; but we scarcely think the Punchinello a suitable thing to introduce in Sculpture, even as a plaything in the hands of a child. No ugliness is so abhorrent to art, as that which caricatures or travesties her mistress, Nature.

Belgium excels in her Sculpture, thanks to Messrs. Geefs, Fraikin, and Jaquet. The work of the first we have just criticised. "L'Amour Captif," by the second, is a group scarcely excelled by anything in the Exhibition. We have praised Mr. Wyatt of Rome, for the beauty of his "Glycera;" M. Fraikin's production is equally beautiful, though in a different way. The former comprises the excellence of sentiment, the latter the perfection of physical charms. The rounded form of female loveliness is here displayed in an attitude singularly elegant, and at the same time perfectly natural. With all the grace of Canova's works, it has yet none of his affectation, though

the subject is exactly one of those most apt to lead the artist into that vice. The same may be said of M. Jaquet's "Cupid Disarmed," and for the pulpiness of its flesh it surpasses them all. The attitude, like the other, is peculiarly elegant, but with just a degree too much consciousness of attraction; nevertheless, it must be pronounced as a work of masterly power. In truth, the three above mentioned sculptors might each with justice lay claim to the title of the Praxiteles of their country. It seems somewhat singular to find, close together in the Exhibition, three figures, all coming from the same part of the world, all appertaining to the same class of art, and all remarkable for the same excellences. In fact, we might say four, for M. Simonis' statue of "Truth," standing near at hand, is of the same character, and but little inferior to the others in quality. As far as this style of art can go, that is to say, as far as the eye can be feasted by the contemplation of female beauty—for be it understood, the mind is here in no way instructed—the end is accomplished. These artists must enter other fields of contest, if they wish yet to add to the number of their laurels.

If we move a step or two away from these syrens of art, we shall find a noble work by Innocenzo Fraccaroli of Verona, the "Wounded Achilles," whose clear muscular development forms a strong contrast with the delicate manipulation of surface in the last; its thorough knowledge of anatomy, and clear decided style of modelling, makes us wish to see a cast of it placed beside the antique

statues in our academy. It would lose nothing by the contact, and the students might be the better for it. M. Fraccaroli understands, too, the value of accessories, as helping to carry out the story. The drinking cup at the feet of the figure suggests at once the scene of the event.

The crowd in the Milanese sculpture-room has ever rendered it difficult to enter; and there are difficulties of another kind, which make us pause ere we mingle with the continuous stream of visitors flowing through it. To animadvert on trickeries, to allude to those perversions of Art, so prevalent in the collection, is neither pleasant nor advantageous; yet such would it be our duty to point out were we to enter into a minute discussion of the merits of individual instances. When we say, that in the best examples of the room there is scarcely a feeling or appreciation of the word beauty, when we say that conceptions of the very worst character abound, and that distortions and disproportions are so numerous as to become almost the prevailing features of the whole, we are aware that we are differing from the opinion expressed by the mass of the English public, and that we shall be deemed in a high degree censorious; but it is not for us to follow the public voice in what we consider an error, because that error may be, as in the present instance, general; on the contrary, the very prevalence of it renders it necessary that we should stand up stoutly and fearlessly for our position. The cause of High Art is involved in teaching the people to reject the meretricious absurdities here pre-



presented to them, indications of a low state of talent in the country from whence they are derived, and insults to the taste of the English who are expected to admire them; it would be mock modesty were we to admit the possibility of our being mistaken on this question, viewed generally, for had we not taken credit to ourselves for some power of judgment, as well as some experience in Art, it would have been the height of presumption to have attempted the writing of a general treatise on the subject; and we may hint that even the dexterous lighting, or rather we should say darkening of the apartment, does not conceal from our eyes the hasty, careless execution of some of the works, though it perhaps hides it in a great measure from the eye of the public, who do not give themselves either the time or trouble to think about it. Lest we should, however, be thought invidious, we will name one or two pieces of sculpture, which we look upon as exceptions to the above remarks.

The "Fainting Ishmael" is a truthful copy of attenuated nature, but painful; the more so for its truth. By representing the boy alone, without the mother, M. Strazza has missed that which in sculpture must always form the pathos of the story. As it is, it rather repulses us than moves our sympathy, owing in part to the treatment being so literal as to convey the idea of its being a cast taken after death. There is also a well-worked colossal bust of the poet Monti, by Sangiorgio, which might be compared to the best portrait-busts of the British sculptors,

who undoubtedly stand highest in that branch of the Art; but it is scarcely fair to enter into a criticism of its merits, as our native artists have not been permitted to exhibit examples of their talent in this line. The jostling of the multitude too begins to be inconvenient, besides sundry hints sounding in our ears, to remind us that our criticisms are scarcely taken in good part, and "grumbler," "prejudiced," "conceited," not being terms particularly pleasing, we will make our way out of this sink of Art-iniquity, and place ourselves before Kiss's "Amazon attacked by a Tiger," where we shall speedily recover our temper, our love for Art, and the hope we sometimes have within us that the day may yet come when it will be rightly understood and appreciated in this country. By general, indeed we may say, by unanimous consent, this has been pronounced the *chef d'œuvre* of sculpture in the Exhibition, not that its conception is more noble than that of many others, but that its aim or purport is more thoroughly carried out in all its parts. Its design is unexceptionable, but we still reserve our opinion that a work, which conveys the impression of mental action, is superior to one in which physical energy alone is represented, and this undoubtedly is in a main degree of the latter kind: yet we can but confess that in no other piece of sculpture do we see that masterly knowledge of forms, that harmonious arrangement of line, that bold energetic style of modelling which we find here. It is the same whether we look at the woman or at the animals, the anatomy of both

equally well understood and portrayed, the expression of both is given with equal power and truth; every part is imbued with the spirit of the whole, the courageous energy of the rider is shown in her countenance, in the wild flowing of her hair, in the action of every limb, and even in the drapery, which aids by its movement the rapid volition of its wearer; and all this energy too is given without the least detraction from her beauty. It is the same with the terror-stricken horse; the shock conveyed by the attack of his terrific enemy is felt through every limb, his fear is expressed in the action of every part. It is the same again with the tiger; it clings to its prey as if it would never again loosen its hold, seems in fact to have grown to its unfortunate victim, so close is its deadly gripe. No work perhaps ever presented such a variety of views, each so different from the other, and yet all so harmonious and so expressive; for, from no one point of sight do we lose the action, or in any way misunderstand the nature of the contest going on. It is this completeness, this thorough carrying out of its meaning in every portion, that makes the group so justly and so universally admired. The first impression which it made upon us, was that of awe created by the presence of talent almost superhuman; and frequent subsequent examinations have in no degree lessened our respect for it; in fact, were we to exhaust every term of panegyric which language could supply us with, we believe we should not be over-rating the genius displayed by Professor Kiss in



this, his great masterpiece of Art. In our eagerness to get to it, we find we have passed by several things: among them, Kalide's beautiful group of "The Boy and Swan," intended for a fountain, singularly free in its style of treatment; most of them, however, and this amidst the rest, are shown as specimens of castings in zinc, rather than for their merits as works of Art; in fact, some of them are from antique statues. Among them we perceive a cast from Bailey's lovely statue of "Eve," which leads us to remark, that had we had this in marble, it would have tended much to support the character of the English school, for it deservedly ranks as among the classics of British Sculpture, and as such should not have been absent from a display like the present. The zinc cast gives some idea of its beauty, at the same time does but imperfect justice to its merits.

The colossal "Lion," by Müller, of Munich, presents no particular feature to comment upon beyond its enormous size, and the successful manner in which it has been transferred to metal; and being a part only of a large composition, it may be unfair to criticise it when separate from the rest. It seems carefully copied from nature, more so than is usual with allegorical works, in which artists seem sometimes to take a pleasure in departing from truth, though for what purpose it would puzzle them to tell. Altogether, it may be pronounced to be well studied, though not of great power: it seems deficient in that definition of the skeleton, which we find in

M. Méné's small bronze models of animals. The latter artist exhibits his acquaintance with the internal anatomy of his subjects somewhat too ostentatiously, M. Müller too timidly.

We may pass over a group of "Adam and Eve," by M. Jerichau, a pupil of the great Thorwaldsen, and turn our attention to a better composition by him, in the small Denmark department, which has been but little noticed by visitors, though it bespeaks the master in Art as strongly as anything in the building, whether foreign or English. His plaster model of a young hunter seizing the cub of a female panther, has so much the character of the best Phidian antiques, that at first sight we suspected an imitation, and fancied we were looking at a cast from some first-rate, but comparatively unknown, specimen of ancient Art. Imitation of the antique with M. Jerichau is not however that insipid unmeaning copying of its peculiarities, which characterizes the productions of those who, having no genius of their own, hope to obtain credit for such by forging the handwriting of their predecessors; he imitates it in its strength, not in its weakness, in its beauty, not in its affectation, in its best points, not its worst; and he is therefore after all not so much a follower of the old Greek artists, as one who may lay claim to be called their comrade, by having learnt his art from the same source. It is true he could not have arrived at the pure vigorous style displayed in this group, had he not previously seen the old works; but it is fair in Art, as in

everything else that is progressive, to gain experience from the past, else what others have accomplished before us would be useless, inasmuch as every one would have to go back to the original starting post whence mankind began. Any school of Art which affects to throw aside, as useless, the truths elicited by experience, and to return to the crudities of early times, is surely entitled to no other name than infatuation, bigotry, or fanaticism. M. Jerichau, however, has not done this, he has profited by that which has gone before him, and learnt by the same means to accomplish the same ends. So like is his work to Greek Art, that were we disciples of Pythagoras, we should fancy M. Jerichau possessed of the soul of some old sculptor of the Parthenon. If so, however, the spirit has returned to earth in days far different from those of his first existence. He will find no enthusiastic multitude to admire the manly efforts of his chisel, and honour him for his labour. Critics he may meet with, it is true, ready enough to daub over every portion of his work with signs of their disapprobation, whether he stand it up in the market-place for their inspection or not; but he must be contented, instead of the poetic fervour of his countrymen, to meet with a people indifferent to the beauty of Art, and impenetrable to its impulses; he must be satisfied to shape out his imaginings for himself instead of for others, to see them neglected instead of admired, and to learn at last that his genius is like the pearl, which the poor fowl in the fable found in the dust.



not worth so much to him as would have been a grain of barley.

In the same room are also several small copies in biscuit and ivory from the works of Thorwaldsen himself, but so very diminutive, that they scarcely convey more than a general impression of their designs, the more to be regretted as the eye of the English public is but little acquainted with his productions, though his name is tolerably familiar in their mouths. From them we may turn again into the main avenue to the statue of "Eve tempted by the Serpent," by the Dutch sculptor, Van Der Ven, who seems to have great knowledge, but to be singularly deficient in grace; for anything more awkward than the pose of this figure can scarcely exist; in fact, we should have deemed it our duty to be silent on it, as we have been on many others, but that it possesses, as we have before said, great knowledge and power of hand, and pity it is, it should be so marred by the absence of the other quality. Compare the abrupt angles, and violent contrasts, in the attitude of this figure, with the gentle undulating ever-varying graceful line, given by Bailey's "Eve at the Fountain," in every view, and the difference between a skilful hand, when it is guided by a refined mind and when it is not, will at once be seen.

Hiram Power's "Fisher Boy," listening to the murmur in the shell, is simple and unaffected, though by no means new in idea; like his "Greek Slave" it is carefully and delicately wrought with the chisel; workmanship appears

in fact to be the merit of both, for in the design of either there is not much to recommend. The latter in truth is little else than what has been put forth before under other names; it is something however to exhibit taste in the manipulation of form, for if it be not genius, it will rank as talent, and often help to redeem a work otherwise essentially mediocre; besides, where there is one person who can appreciate originality of conception, there are hundreds who can admire cleverness of hand.

How different is the other American sculptor; he carves out new thoughts on the marble, stamps it with new impressions, gives us in his "Wounded Indian," a representation never before attempted in Art—the dying chief of a race itself fast dying away from the face of the earth. Mr. Stephenson evidently feels, and feels rightly, that the power of his Art lies in association. We could almost envy him the opportunity of producing a work so original, so true to nature, so national, so suggestive, so powerful in its appeal. The arrow which has pierced the side of the warrior, and brought him sickening to the earth, will leave him there to make room for those, before whom not only he and all his tribe, but even his forest habitations must ere long fade away. As he sinks, a new race will arise to inhabit his home; new laws, new customs and manners spring up with which he has no feeling or connection; his life, his deeds, the injuries he has suffered by being driven from his birth-right, even his very being will be forgotten, or remembered but as a dream; and why? Simply because the

unsearchable decrees of Providence require changes to take place, which render his existence no longer necessary. But what has all this to do with the merits of Mr. Stephenson's statue? Much! If it call up these thoughts he is entitled to praise, not only for the judicious choice of subject, but for the efficient way in which he has worked it out, and most efficient it is; original in conception, strong in character, true in expression, natural and appropriate in action, correct and at the same time elegant in form, and careful in execution. It has been urged that the muscles are too hardly marked, too distinctly defined; but we suspect the observation has not been made by those who have seen these native warriors of the prairies; but even supposing they have not, they might have judged better, had they looked at the wild animals, for they would have there found the same clear, dry marking of the form, created, as in this instance, by their active and abstemious life. Mr. Stephenson need not fear censure; he is in the right path, and if he but continue to trust to his impulses in his future works, as he has done in this, success is certain. There is within him the power to establish a school of Sculpture for his country, as free, as bold, as intrepid and independent as her institutions.

In retracing our steps up the nave, but little worthy of attention arrests our progress. Russia exhibits no specimen of pure Sculpture. The Hall of the Zollverein, rich as it is, contains not much either that comes under our present subject. Rome, if we are to consider that she



displays an average specimen of what she is doing, shows strong evidence of the decline of High Art with her. Take away the works of the late Mr. Wyatt, to whom her title is at the best a doubtful one, and she has not a single example indicative of anything like vigour. On the contrary, there is every symptom of that lassitude which occurs in nations, as in individuals, after great exertion, and which may not unreasonably be expected in her, considering her mighty deeds of old. She is capable, however, of better things than are here presented to us; she has, in fact, kept back her best works, and sent those articles only which she is in the habit of manufacturing wholesale to supply the demand of the newly-made cognoscenti, who travel through her country. Feeble yet elaborate workmanship, servile adhesion to ancient conventionalities, devotion of time and labour to what is interesting to the dilettanti, rather than the man who loves Art for the sake of itself, and the ennobling impulses which it conveys, characterise the mass of her productions. Strange that the city which may justly be called the Metropolis of Art, should be so deficient. Whether the great works which she possesses, paralyse all efforts to equal them, or whether the constant working under their shadow is destroying the original spirit within her, we will not venture to say, but so it is; little now comes from her save inferior imitations of what has been done in better days.

Mr. Pradier's nymph "Phryne," marks the entrance to the Sevres-Room, a figure belonging no doubt to the pure

style of Art, but scarcely supporting the high reputation held by the sculptor in Paris. The line of the drapery, running so exactly down the centre in front, cuts it too equally in halves. In one profile it is completely draped, in the other it is almost nude; and this difference, too violent to be harmonious, prevents a unity or singleness of purpose in it. M. Pradier has been led by his love for classic Art to execute this statue in Greek marble; and there is evidence in it that proves he has found it less suitable than the Italian. Colouring the margin of the drapery too does not add to its beauty in our estimation. We are aware that frequent examples of this practice are found in the antique, but venture nevertheless to express our opinion that it is not a thing worthy of imitation.

Within the room is M. Debay's group of "Eve and her Two Sons;" or, as it is called, "Le Premier Berceau," of which we must express our sincere admiration, both for its original conception and beautiful execution. M. Debay is, we understand, a painter, that is, he devotes his talents more generally to Painting, for to his title as a sculptor no one can demur, who has seen this most successful effort. We mention the fact merely because there is, we fancy, in the group an unrestrained flow of idea, and a freedom of workmanship, arising from his practising in both Arts. It has, however, been criticised somewhat severely, considering its high merits. The attitude of Eve has been pronounced unnatural; but sufficient consideration has not, we think, been given to the circumstance of

its being the representation of a mother, in the earliest and most primitive age, when she can scarcely be expected to have held her children exactly after the manner most approved of by the old nurses of the present day. All things, even the attitudes we place ourselves in, are more or less influenced by the trammels which civilised society throws around us. Were we, for instance, to find a gentleman of the present day throwing himself about on the ground, lounging at full length in the fields, after the manner in which we find the brigands of *Salvator Rosa* reposing themselves, we should pronounce it to be anything but natural, though with the savage beings and wild scenery which that glorious painter has represented, it is in perfect unison. Thus it is with this group. Before deciding on what is appropriate or inappropriate, on what is natural or unnatural, we must divest our thoughts of all that belongs to an after period, and throw ourselves back in imagination to the time of the first family of man. This, we believe, *M. Debay* has done; and this let the critic also do, before he censure the production. The way in which the future character, history, and destination of the men are shadowed forth in the children, shows *M. Debay* to be a philosophic reflective artist; it leads the mind of the spectator to dwell on future events, the effects of causes but then incipient; to ponder on the Alpha and Omega of this first page in the history of man, and to gather from it a moral the better for himself. This has, we deem, been the object of the artist, and well would



that be if every one would endeavour to read the language addressed to them, rather than to measure him by a standard set up by themselves—a rule, in fact, at all times applicable to criticism in Art.

Lest our remarks run to too great a length, we shall now make our way out again to the nave, and towards the transept, where we find ourselves again amidst the English sculptors. With Foley we commence, a name we believe we have not before mentioned, perhaps luckily; for when fighting the battle of British Art it may be as well to hold back some of our best men as a reserve, and among them Mr. Foley undoubtedly stands. His "Youth at the Stream," which gained for him justly the prize at Westminster-Hall, and which is here twice exhibited, once in bronze and once in plaster, is a charming figure; he can afford, however, our limiting ourselves to saying, that we give our cordial assent to all the praise bestowed upon it.

Were we called on to pick out a thoroughly successful effort in Portrait-Sculpture, in which character, dignity, elegance, and expression, are combined; in which, without departure from truth, either in likeness or costume, all that is required in this branch of Art is attained, we should name his statue of "Hampden." We are sure that even Wandyke and Velasquez, those masters in the art of giving nobility to the human form, would, were they alive, acknowledge Mr. Foley a kindred genius with themselves. As a test of the merits of this statue, let us remove from the name of Hampden, and consider it as representing

merely an unknown, it will yet, without this aid, impress us with the notion that we are looking at one of Nature's noblemen, at the effigy of a great determined spirit, capable of standing boldly forward in defence of a righteous cause, and of adhering to it against difficulties apparently insurmountable. It is not so much the bodily likeness that is here given as the outward visible sign of the inward soul and spirit of the original. While England is capable of producing works of this calibre, she need not fear competition in art with the world; and if they be not always of the nude, or made exactly after the pattern laid down by the ancients, so much the better, they will serve the more to mark the time, the school, and the country, to which they belong.

It may be thought we ought to pause before the equestrian statues of her Majesty and Prince Albert, that are near at hand; but it is out of no disrespect to the royal personages themselves that we abstain from doing so; but rather that our loyalty feels in no degree satisfied with such representations, either of our gracious Sovereign or her illustrious Consort, the founder and sustainer of the gigantic scheme now before us.

Mr. Adams' figure of "An ancient Briton," must not be overlooked as the work of a young artist, who, if we may judge from this, is not unlikely one day to distinguish himself; nor Mr. Earl's "Adam and Eve," which, though wanting in intention or meaning, contains an elegant and well-varied combination of line. Mr. Stephens' "Descent

Stalker," too, is a vigorously conceived and highly successful figure, exhibiting considerable knowledge and judicious treatment, and reminding us in its design of nothing belonging to either antique or modern Art, emanating, in fact, fresh from the school of nature.

Bell's "Falkland" is manly in its style, though not so carefully studied in its parts as could be wished. The finest specimen exhibited by this artist is, the "Eagle Slayer," which will bear comparison for correctness of form with any of the foreign productions. If Mr. Bell values the lasting of his reputation he will execute this statue in marble; may be he has already done so. His name will then have a good chance of a place among the classics of English Sculpture.

Prof. Rauch's figure of "Victory" stands, unfortunately for him, in the English division of the building, otherwise it must inevitably have attracted the attention, and elicited the applause it so highly deserves, but which, for that reason alone, it has not obtained. The eager inspiration with which she looks over the battle field, in search of her hero to crown him with her laurels, is nobly felt and expressed; the marble not only breathes, but the very heart palpitates within it. How great, and yet how little, in Sculpture, are the distinctions between the work of genius and mere handicraft; the material, the subject, the form, the treatment, the attitude, the combination of parts, the arrangement of lines, in both shall be all but alike; and yet the one shall express thought, feeling,



impulse, emotion, passion, sentiment, life, action, power; shall gain for itself admiration, love, sympathy; shall breathe, speak, persuade, inspire us, win us, lead us by its silent eloquence to new ideas, new associations, new pleasures, and obtain at last a permanent mastery over the soul, which we in vain resist, and are the gainers by acknowledging; while the other, with all the care bestowed upon it, with all its correctness, without even a fault, shall be incapable of moving us towards it, of gaining for itself either our respect or our affection; and why is this difference? It is dependent neither on the study, the experience, or the knowledge, of the artist; it is simply a question of the sources from whence the work has sprung: of whether the stream has flowed from the hot-springs, or the ice-bergs of humanity. In Art, as in nature, the tree beareth fruit after its own kind, and the image of the parent is reflected in the child. Of Prof. Rauch we know but little, but, as believers in the above assertion, we argue that he highly deserves, both as a man and a sculptor, the honours which are heaped upon him in his own country, and the encomiums which are wafted with his name through the world.

After Rauch, Stephens again presents himself to notice, in his two groups "Satan whispering in the ear of Eve," and "Michael, the conqueror of Satan." Had English Sculptors received any encouragement in the higher walks of the Art, efforts like these would not have remained unnoticed, or have been left in the unsatisfactory

state of the mere model. The former in particular is a grand epic work. We know not, indeed, if we have ever seen the character of the fallen one so forcibly depicted; and the sleeping Eve is by no means without beauty. The two figures in the second group are, perhaps, not quite so well combined; the one standing perpendicular, and the other lying nearly horizontal, and consequently at right angles with the first, is scarcely harmonious. The figure of Michael, however, taken singly, is modelled with great purity of style, and is in fact a noble work.

Mr. Bailey displays two statues, a "Greek Hunter in repose," and a "Nymph," both of which, like all else that he does, show a high feeling for grace and beauty. The nymph in particular, though but slightly modelled, contains nearly all the essentials to female loveliness, requiring only that finish in the marble, which this artist knows so well how to give, to make it a truly charming creation.

The British half of the palace, leaving the transept out of the question, does not contain so much Sculpture as the foreign one, yet in our path along it we shall still find something to admire.

The head of Behnes' statue of Sir W. Follett, whatever weaknesses may exist in other parts of the figure, fully justifies the reputation he has for giving intellectual expression, and flesh-like character to his faces.

Of Wyatt's "Dog" we shall merely say that it is

carefully and truthfully modelled, and elaborately carved; and express our wish that no attempt had been made in it to imitate colour. This was, however, we believe, done by express desire of the nobleman for whom it was intended; if so, the artist is of course not so much to blame.

The twin statues of "Lords Eldon and Stowel," by the late Mr. Watson, exhibit great severity, dignity, and grandeur, notwithstanding the hands are just a degree too large, (a fault easily remedied,) the heads just a shade too much alike, even for brothers, and that the draperies are deficient here and there in breadth; still there is the right feeling in them. Next to Foley's "Hampden," we may class them, in fact, as the most masterly efforts in portraiture in the Exhibition. Art had much to regret in the loss of Mr. Watson, as these figures testify. Indeed, at one time it seemed as if he were destined to take the lead among British sculptors; but death cut off his career early in life, and just as the public had commenced duly to appreciate the power of his genius.

The so called "Fine Arts Court" is an odd medley, owing to the want of some regulation as to the admission of objects. Here are things of the highest talent, and there by the side of them the attempts of mere children, for by no other name can we call them. This seems a great pity, for though among the immense quantity considerable taste is displayed, the whole mass seems contaminated by the presence of these absurdities. Most of



the clever productions, however, belong to ornamental Art. There seems, indeed, only one artist of merit, that comes, strictly speaking, under the denomination of a sculptor, Mr. Edwards; him, however, we shall mention, for we have the highest possible respect for his talent; he rarely exhibits largely, but in all that he does there is a delicacy of feeling, which indicates a refined mind. His bas-relief, which he calls "The Last Dream," apparently designed for monumental purposes, is evidence of it, as are also his two medallion heads. Neither of them are large works, yet they have many, if not all, the qualities of High Art. That this sculptor rarely exhibits works of a large size is with us matter of regret; for we believe he is capable of great things, and only requires to be brought forward more prominently, to be appreciated as he deserves. Will he pardon our giving him advice? it will show him that our praise is sincere, if it answer no other good purpose; it is that he look to the severe simplicity of the antique, that he may not be led away by the redundancy of his taste, into a too florid and painter-like style. It is the only error he has to unlearn; well would it be for us, if we could say the same of ourselves.

The chief force of the English sculptors is concentrated in the court on the opposite side; but as we pass through the nave to it we may allude to Mr. Bell's clever statue of "Shakspeare;" his intention has been evidently to adhere strictly to the monumental head at Stratford, and to supply body and limbs in perfect unison with the

simplicity of the old work ; in this he has succeeded, as well as in making it a dignified statue ; yet, we question if Mr. Bell should have limited himself to it. The bust at Stratford is interesting, because we hope it is a contemporary likeness of the great bard, and is moreover nearly all we possess of him ; but, looking at it as a work of Art, it puts forth no very high pretensions. Mr. Bell's statue, however, as the work of a much later period, can never have the slightest claim to be called an authentic likeness. Should he not, therefore, have aimed more at expressing the intellectual character of the poet ? the only means by which such a work can derive value. Roubiliac has done so in his figure in the British Museum. With all its affectation of dress, the head teems with thought. If it be not as literal a likeness as Mr. Bell's—though who can tell?—it at any rate tallies more with what imagination suggests, as the outward expression of that great concentrated essence of mind.

We must content ourselves with alluding shortly to the works in the English Sculpture-room, having already mentioned most of the best names. Gibson's "Hunter" may be quoted for the anatomical knowledge and freedom of action which it displays. Foley has a work in no way inferior to his others, and too well known to require comment ; his "Ino and Bacchus" shows his mastery over female beauty and childish joy, as much as does his "Hampden" his excellence in the severer phases of humanity. MacDowell gives a further example of his

delicate treatment of youthful female form in his statue of "Early Sorrow." Lawlor, a rising sculptor, is not surpassed by any in the whole Exhibition for the modelling of female flesh, as witness his "Crouching Bather." Behnes' "Lady Godiva" is singularly delicate, considering how particularly liable the subject is to errors of a reverse kind; it may be considered, in fact, his *chef d'œuvre*, and a work that, from its size as well as its merit, will gradually become a confirmed favourite with the public. Credit must be given to it too as being the first, in this country at least, of that series of females seated on animals, with which Art has of late been somewhat inundated. His "Startled Nymph" is also a lovely figure, though wanting in finish. The Art Union statuettes, in the centre of the room, form altogether strong evidence of the bad state of competition. Here again, however, Mr. Lawlor's name may be brought forward as showing surpassing excellence. But enough; sufficient evidence has been given that the English school of Sculpture is in no way deficient in talent; that it wants merely a fair unprejudiced attention from the public, to enable it to stand boldly up with that of any other nation: and we would appeal to the British patrons of Art, and ask, if to encourage native genius is not nobler, is not productive of more good to their country, is not more conducive of unalloyed satisfaction to themselves, than the importing the works of other lands?



## CHAPTER FOURTH.

---

OF THE MATERIALS AND PROCESSES USED IN THE FINE ARTS.

---

THAT the Fine Arts are an intellectual pursuit, and not a mechanical employment, might be shown, if necessary, by the simplicity of the processes used in them, and by the little change that has taken place in those processes during the many ages in which they have been practised. Even the few novel inventions that have been brought to bear upon them, have tended in no way to improve their quality; some, on the contrary, have been found rather to detract from their excellence than otherwise. The only change which new discoveries have created in the Fine Arts, has been the saving of time and labour in the multiplying of copies with greater facility, and the consequent cheapening of cost. It may be fairly presumed that the ancient Greeks and Romans, in the palmy days of Sculpture, employed much the same methods in working their statues as do the artists of the present day. It is true, there is no direct evidence of their having modelled them previous to commencing the marble, but

their terra-cottas and bronzes show indubitably their knowledge of modelling in clay, and their acquaintance with the processes of moulding and casting: and it is but fair, especially when we consider the excellence of their marble figures, and the numbers which they produced, to infer that they must have applied that knowledge to facilitate the working of them. It is probable, again, that the manner of taking measurements on the marble from the model was much about the same as it now is. The Italians, a people not noted for throwing aside old notions, or much addicted to exchanging old lamps for new, still adopt the most simple plan for this purpose, that of dropping plumb-lines from fixed points over model and marble, in order to ascertain the relative position of parts. Before describing the mechanical operation which a work in Sculpture undergoes, a few remarks may be made on the various materials now or formerly in use in the Art. The ancients employed a greater variety of substances for their statues and groups than the moderns: many of them, however, were chosen, merely because they were the native productions best suited to the object; for instance, the syenites, bazalts, and granites, of the Egyptians. Then, again, the Greeks were fortunate enough to possess, within their own islands, the beautiful Parian marble, of which their ancient statues are composed; and the Italians have had the advantage of a white limestone existing in their own country, superior even in purity and fineness of

crystal to that of the Greeks; and this last, commonly known by the name of statuary marble, is that now chiefly employed in Sculpture. Vitrified substances were in use among the ancient Egyptians for small works, as may be seen from specimens in the British Museum. They were in the habit, too, of employing more than one material in the same work—for example, of making the statue itself of wood or stone, with glass or jewels inserted for the eyes, and the draperies and ornaments of metals. The Israelites, who in all probability adopted most of the methods of the Egyptians, followed this plan also: for frequent allusion is made to it in the sacred writings. Indeed, if we consider the method which Moses used to destroy the molten calf, as described in two distinct places, *Exod.*, c. xxxii., v. 20, and *Deut.*, c. ix., v. 21—we shall perceive that, though generally understood as a molten image, it must have been composed of either wood or stone—probably the former—and merely decorated with molten ornaments; for had it been entirely cast or molten, he could not have ground it to dust, nor have strawed the ashes in the brook, as he is said to have done. The ancient Greeks employed not only marble and bronze, but ivory and gold; the ivory was cut into thin plates, and laid on the surface, by which a beautiful flesh-like colour was imparted to the naked portions of the statues, while the precious metals served to give colour to the drapery. This manner is described as the one adopted by Phidias in his colossal statues of Jupiter and



Minerva. All these different materials, with the exception of marble and bronze, have gradually fallen, more or less, into disuse with the moderns, either because they have been found too expensive, or not to agree with the effect now sought in Sculpture. Wood is still partially employed, but more for architectural Sculpture than pure Art, and ivory for small cabinet works. Silver and gold, as is well known, are made to serve for a species of Art distinct from the one now alluded to, and which we shall have to speak of hereafter. It may seem a subject of regret that all these substances, so beautiful in themselves, and in many respects so suitable to the purposes of Sculpture, should be laid aside, or only adopted in the lower or ornamental branches of the Art; and were Sculpture intended merely to gratify the eye, there would then be real cause to deplore the rejection of them; but it has been found that the presence of gorgeous colours, of rich and expensive materials, tends to distract the attention from the higher purposes of the Art, to lessen the effect derived from what may be termed its intellectual or moral power. For this reason, bodies, which may be termed neutral, are by general consent chosen—that is to say, which being colourless and possessing within themselves no positive value, do not disturb the effect created by the workmanship, on the beauty of which Sculpture should alone depend.

The first thing to settle in a statue or group is the general design; for this purpose the artist, having chosen

his subject, makes one or more sketches on paper, representing his conception of the treatment appropriate to it; these he will vary as improvements on the original idea suggest themselves, or as new notions spring up. Having to a certain extent, satisfied himself with one or other of them, as expressing fully what he wishes, and as being at the same time harmonious in its arrangement, he then proceeds to make from it a small sketch or model in clay, in order to ascertain its probable effect, in other views than the one represented on the paper, for it must be recollected that Sculpture is widely different from sister Art, Painting; the former has many views to consider, the latter has but one; and though in a piece of Sculpture there will of course be principal views, more effective than others, still they must all be agreeable, and to a certain extent suggestive, or expressive, of the main idea; and for this reason the sculptor has frequently to sacrifice or modify that which, were only one view to be considered, would aid him forcibly in his intentions. It is scarcely necessary to say, therefore, that alterations occur again in these clay sketches, and more than one is frequently made before the final decision on the question of design takes place; this done, the full size model is commenced in clay, the same material as the sketch, and for this the artist has to supply supports, as it rarely happens, except in recumbent figures, that the clay will hold itself together in the required position without their aid. No difficulty exists, however, in providing these, the

roughest hedge-carpentering answering the purpose better than the finest workmanship. All that has to be done is to build up upon the stool a rough wood work of sufficient strength to bear the weight of the clay, and prevent it sinking, and to so arrange it, that it shall be contained within the surface of the proposed model. Upon this the clay is kneaded by the hand into the requisite form, unassisted by anything but a few very simple wooden tools, that help to cut, scrape, or press, as may be required. The clay itself is that prepared by the potters for the common white stone ware, and is in no way expensive. Young inexperienced artists often show an over-strong predilection for the use of these wooden spatulas, or modelling tools, as by their assistance they find they can more easily obtain a smooth surface to their work ; but experience afterwards teaches them, that an imitation of the pulpy surface of the flesh can only be obtained from the touch of flesh itself ; or, in other words, from the pressure of the finger and thumb ; and that the wooden tools must be used sparingly, merely as assistants to the hand ; otherwise a hard mechanical style is apt to creep in. There is in truth in a real artist, when working on his clay, the same species of feeling as in a fine pianoforte player, who draws expression from the instrument, not barely from correctness of note, but from a mental absorption in the music, which imparts itself to his touch ; and this affinity between head and hand is interrupted in the sculptor, when the modelling tool intervenes between the surface of his work and the delicate sensation with which his hands are endowed.



With persons unacquainted with Sculpture, there is a general impression that the cutting of the marble is the most difficult part; but those who are intimate with the Art know that the designing and modelling are the primary portions, and that the other, though of course requiring some knowledge as well as taste, is, in comparison, scarcely more than a clever manual dexterity. The artist in fact employs his own hand almost entirely on the designs and modelling; for in these stages he has to originate almost all the beauties of his work, and he knows if his model be in any way defective, inaccurate in its proportions, or wanting in beauty or expression, that there is no hope that such defects will be remedied in the marble. The latter portion is indeed, in a measure, a mechanical process of copying, restricted, by the very means it employs, from departing to any great extent from the model. Of this, however, we shall speak hereafter. Our model is not yet finished; nature must be referred to, and that frequently, to give an air of truth to it, which never was and never will be gained, except by reference to her. We will, however, suppose that our sculptor has, by dint of time and labour, thoroughly studied his model, compared it with, and corrected it from nature, arranged his draperies and subordinate parts in proper order, brought all the surfaces up to a necessary degree of smoothness; in fact, given, to the best of his talent and power, actual embodiment of that which his mind has conceived. It is still in the soft clay, which will not bear moving, nor be durable for long, as it is liable to

shrinking, and, if not constantly supplied with moisture, would eventually crack, owing to the supports within not allowing every part to diminish in an equal degree. It has for this reason to be moulded and cast into plaster, a process we shall briefly describe. Plaster of Paris is a strong, fine, white lime, made from gypsum or alabaster ground to powder, and baked; and, so prepared, has the property of crystallizing rapidly when mixed with water; or, in other words, of condensing itself into a hard body. A certain quantity is mixed with water, sufficient to form a liquid of about the consistency of good cream; and thrown over a portion of the model, walls of soft clay having been built round that portion, in order to prevent it from running on the other parts. The object of thus covering a part only at a time will be seen presently, and the proper division of such parts must be learnt by experience, as it depends entirely upon the peculiarities of the model. This liquid plaster of Paris will, under the hands of an experienced workman, take an exact impression of the surface, and in the course of a few minutes become hard, as we have before explained. More must be added, however, in order to render it of the thickness necessary to sustain itself; which thickness will depend on the size of the object to be moulded. The clay walls are then removed, when we have one half or more of the model covered with a hard shell, the edges of which stand up clean and square from the clay. These edges are then soiled with clay-water, and the same process goes on

with the other half; or, if it be a very complicated work, there may perhaps be three, four, or even five pieces of mould, all made in this way in succession. The whole having been covered, after this manner, with a coating the inner surface of which has taken a delicate impression of every marking on the model, the next step is to open this shell or mould, in order to take out the clay. If the joints between the pieces have been well washed with clay-water, these will separate easily, by the driving in, at judicious distances, a few wooden wedges. At any rate, one piece will come away by this means, and from the opening thus made we can pick out the clay, just as it will best come, only taking care not to injure the surface of the mould, as any damage done to that will show itself in the cast. The interior of the mould is now washed with a soft brush and water, and the pieces again put together, and bound round with ropes to keep them to their places. The whole is well saturated with water, and fresh plaster of Paris of a finer quality poured into it, through the mouth, formed by the underneath side of the base. This also, becoming in a few minutes hard, forms a fac-simile in plaster of the clay model to be afterwards extracted from the outer casing or mould. Between the surfaces of the two, however, there is but little adhesion, as the saturating the first with water previous to filling it with the second, prevents it. The removing the outer coating is accomplished by chipping it off in small pieces, by means of a



mallet and blunt chisel. This part of the work requires considerable practice, as well as caution, to prevent injuring the cast; but if everything have been well managed, the pieces will splinter off before the edge of the chisel reaches it. To remedy, at last, any little faults or inaccuracies that may have occurred, rasps, glass-paper, fish-skin, and for small work, Dutch-rush, are used. The working of the marble now begins, which, if it require not the highest talent, takes at least the longest time and the greatest labour. The model and marble are fastened in relative positions, on two square blocks of stone, having each, along the edge in front, a scale of parts marked out, similar to those on a carpenter's rule. The "pointing-instrument," as it is called, is then applied, which consists generally of an upright pole, with a cross piece attached, that travels along the edge so marked, just as a T square travels along the edge of a drawing board. (This pointing-instrument may indeed be well conceived, by fancying a large T square, the long part round instead of flat, and perpendicular instead of horizontal.) To this is attached a circular metal bar, and at the end of that again a needle, with ball and socket joints between both. By the aid of these joints the workman can fix the point of the needle on any part of his model, and, having by means of the screws tightened the joints, can transfer the instrument from the stone on which the model rests to the other; when of course the relative position of that part in the marble will be indicated, if the instrument itself be fixed

to the corresponding number on the scale. It is, in fact, nothing more than a system of finding a third point from two already given. Various improvements have, from time to time, been made on this instrument, in order to gain facility of motion, but the principle in all is the same. The best one is, perhaps, that invented by Behnes some years back, for which the Society of Arts awarded its gold medal. It possesses greater variety of movement than any other, and, as such, is more convenient to the workman; but has one drawback—a too great liability to get out of repair. Indeed it will be easily understood, that in an operation where dust and small pieces of marble are constantly flying about, it is not advisable to have to do with machinery of too delicate a construction. By the simple method the block is hewn out roughly, but correctly into shape, and a great number of points or perforations are made in it, the bottom of which represent the surface of the model, and correspond, in distance from each other with small pencil dots, marked, at the time of taking them upon the model. These marks on marble and model form so many guides for the carver, who now takes the work in hand; so that his mind is entirely relieved from the apprehension of any error in the main proportions, or position of parts, these being definitely fixed by the points themselves. He has merely to copy what he sees correctly, by the aid of those points, and to bring the whole to a good fine surface; his ingenuity is displayed in clearing out, with his chisel and hand-drill, the deep

settings—often a very difficult task, attended, not only with a great deal of labour—but requiring considerable skill as well as practice. The marble comes at last, again into the artist's studio, from whence the model emanated; and his delight is then in giving those final touches, which remove from it any hardness or immobility it may have acquired under the hands of a copier, and impart to it the spirit and character of nature. The whole is ultimately rubbed over with sand and water, by the aid of small pieces of wood and linen rags, to remove the dry dusty appearance, derived from the chisel or rasp, and to bring up the lucid beauty of the material.

When the multiplying of casts is required, as is frequently the case, a mould is again made upon the finished marble, much after the fashion previously described with the clay, but composed of an immense number of pieces, fitting one within the other, so as to admit of each one coming away separately from the marble, and, again, from the casts, without injury to either. This is professionally termed "safe-moulding," on account of the outer coating being preserved; in opposition to the other, which is called "waste moulding," from the shell or mould being destroyed in the process. Any reasonable number of casts may be taken from the safe-moulds.

Bronze-casting is another distinct process in the Fine Arts, little understood by artists themselves, and requiring moreover considerable accommodation in the way of premises, furnaces, apparatus, &c. For these reasons it is



frequently entrusted to regular trade-founders, who understand well enough the moulding, and melting of metals, but who cannot be expected to comprehend the niceties required in a good work of Art. The consequence is, in this country at least, that considerable deterioration often takes place, the bronze-casting representing but imperfectly the form of the original model. The practice in these ordinary foundries is to mould the parts of a statue in sand and loam, after the manner of common metal castings; and without doubt much expense is thereby saved; but the result is never quite satisfactory, as these materials are not fine enough to take a sharp impression, nor stable enough to retain it uninjured during the operation of building the core and pouring the metal; owing to which, many parts of the mould have to be repaired by the workman, and accuracy to the model is lost. In the engineer's work, castings are all afterwards made true by planing, turning, filing, &c.; so that, provided they be sound, it is not positively necessary that they should be in every respect accurate: not so with Fine-Art-bronzes. Chasing, in fact all tool work on the metal, tends to destroy freedom of manipulation, and to produce in its stead a stiff mechanical style, the reverse of all semblance of flexibility. It is desirable therefore that a bronze statue should be cast from the mould as perfect as can be; and that it be subject, as little as possible, to the operation of the chaser's chisels and punches; though of course these must be brought into use, to a certain extent, as matters

of necessity, rather than choice. It is to be regretted that no good specimen is shown in the Great Exhibition, illustrative of unchased bronze-casting on a large scale. The great "Lion of Bavaria," is perhaps the nearest in this respect. The famous "Amazon," by Kiss, so perfect in every way, is merely in zinc—a metal which requires much less management than bronze—so that it scarcely comes under the present discussion. The Coalbrook-Dale Company's figures are undoubtedly fine after their kind, but the whole of them have been gone over by the tool, cleverly, it is true, but still with a tendency to what is here alluded to.

Moulding for bronze requires frequently that the plaster model should be cut into parts; it rarely happens in fact that a statue or group can be cast in one piece, owing to difficulties that arise, first from the moulding itself, and secondly from the running of the metal into that mould. It will not be requisite to describe the moulding of these pieces, as the process is similar to that previously performed on the clay, with some modifications necessary to suit the nature of metals. There are, however, two or three points which require especial care and attention, and which regulate many of the contrivances adopted in it; and by alluding to these we shall at once enable the reader, aided by what has already been said, to understand the whole business. One of them is the necessity for fully providing for the free entrance of the liquid metal into the mould, as well as for the easy and

perfect escape of the air out of it, as it becomes displaced by the metal; for without proper arrangement for this there is not the slightest chance of the cast being sound, and explosions may take place, destructive, not only of the work, but even of life itself. For this reason channels have to be made in the joints of the mould, down which the metal is first made to run, whence, entering the vacancy left to form the cast at the lowest point, it rises upwards through all the parts, and the air can thus easily escape through other channels cut for that purpose. It should be here mentioned, for the benefit of those unacquainted with the nature of metal casting, that there must always be provided an inner mould, or, as it is termed, a core, to regulate the thickness of the metal. This is managed by laying, on the surface of the outer mould, clay of the required thickness, and then filling up the interior with the same material as the mould itself; after which the outer mould is removed, and the clay taken away, leaving the necessary vacancy for the metal between the two, when they are again put together. The material, to form the mould and core, must be of a consistency to retain the impression given to it from the model; of a nature to resist the action of the hot metal, and sufficiently porous to allow the escape of gas, without which, the liquid fire will not settle quietly and soundly down on its surface. Sand moulds act well, as far as the last two are concerned, but are too fragile for the complicated forms of statue moulding; and experience



has taught us, that a mixture, in equal proportions, of plaster of Paris and brick-dust, serves best all purposes; the former giving it consistency, and the latter answering all desiderata with regard to the metal. These brick-dust and plaster moulds are of course tender, and must therefore be duly supported with irons embedded within them, as well as built upon iron basements, to enable them to be lifted about without injury, by means of cranes. When complete they are bound round by iron hoops, and put into an oven to dry, for five or six weeks, according to their size. Care in this particular is highly important, as the least damp will cause a bubbling, or disturbance of the metal as it runs in. At the end of this time, when the casting takes place, the mould is lowered into a pit prepared for the purpose, and tightly embedded in sand; weights are put upon the top to prevent the uprising of any part as the metal enters; every precaution in fact taken against expansion. Channels are then made of sand from the orifice of the furnace to the mouth of the mould; the furnace is tapped, and the liquid flame rushes out through the roads so formed for it. This is the anxious moment, upon which the result of many weeks' work depends. If the metal run quietly down the mould, and appear again up the passages formed for the escape of the air, it is but reasonable to infer, that it has travelled through every part, and that a good cast will be the result; but if, by chance, a beautiful *jet-de-feu* takes place, reaching almost to the foundry roof, it may be as

well to retire to a respectful distance, notwithstanding that the dispersion of so much valuable metal may create a desire to see where it falls. The moulder, too, may recommence his work immediately, for waiting until tomorrow, when the mould and cast are to be dug out of the pit, will be scarcely worth while. No bronze-mould can serve for more than once, and the cast will be found to have a strong resemblance to a honeycomb, very curious no doubt, but not exactly suited to display clear definition of form. Such noisy and expensive fireworks do not, however, take place in a well managed affair, where there is everything proper for use, and every care taken; but the mention of them may serve to caution those who have not the means at hand to do what is right, or who meddle with the process without the necessary knowledge or experience to guide them. Some variety of opinion exists on the question, of what this metal, called bronze, should be composed; but the late Mr. Maudsley, no mean authority, declared ninety-one of copper to nine of tin to be the best mixture for figure casting; and his opinion has certainly been found correct. An addition of about one and a half of zinc, put in when the copper is melted, makes it flow more freely; but a greater quantity than this is scarcely justifiable, as zinc is liable to be acted upon by acids, and, if used too freely, may endanger the durability of the statue. The mould comes off from the cast in dry dust, as does also the core from the inside. The parts called runners, formed in

the cast by the metal filling up the passages through which it has flowed, and the projecting lines, caused by the seams or joints, have then to be cut off, and any little defects remedied by the chasing-tools. The whole should then be scrubbed with emery and water, to remove a green scurf attached to it, the presence of which is, however, a sure indication of a good surface beneath. The last proceeding is to join the various parts so cast. This is done by first fastening them together by bolts, and then pouring hot metal from a crucible over the joint, six or seven inches at a time, when embedded in sand so as to expose nothing but the edges required to be united. When cool, this leaves a piece of metal standing up, to be afterwards cut away. A repetition of this operation, all along the joint, will be found to unite the parts as solidly as if cast at one time, and will not be at all visible in the finished work. The statue is then complete. Attempts, it is true, are sometimes made to give an artificial colour to the metal, by means of acids, before it leaves the foundry ; but time does that better than anything else. The figure should be set up in its place, showing the natural bright colour of its material. It may seem absurd to conclude a sketch like this, pretending to a certain extent to be practical, by reference to a poem : yet it is a singular fact that considerable insight into metal-casting may be gained, not of course by the professional man, but by those who are curious about it, as adding to their general stock of knowledge, from the reading of Schiller's beautiful " Song



of the Bell," in which truth and imagination are curiously blended, and the finest poetry goes hand in hand with descriptions, showing an intimacy with the mysteries of metal casting rarely found in such writers' works.

As this chapter is devoted to the manufacturing processes of the Fine Arts, we may here briefly allude to some other sorts of work, used in connection with them. The moulding, before described as belonging to plaster-work, is employed for the squeezing of clays into different forms, to be burnt in the pottery-kilns; and for the Roman cements, of which architectural decorations are composed, in this age of cheapness. The practices adopted in bronze moulding are applied, on a small scale, for silver work, at least for such parts as are cast. That branch of Art has, however, a distinct method of its own, by which it is said its best works are produced, and which requires the most skill. It is called by the French, now the most celebrated silversmiths, "*repoussé*" work; and consists, as the word partly implies, of beating up the forms out of a thin sheet of metal. In this method, applicable mostly to flat reliefs, the artist is freed from the annoyance that often arises from inaccurate casting, and as he has the power of working with his chasing-punches on both sides of the metal, and he has his forms perfectly at his command, either to reduce or to add to their projection, as he pleases. The pointing instrument, to which we have referred, is applicable to all materials where copying is desired; and is, we believe, adopted by

wood-carvers, when anything beyond geometrical work is attempted. For wood-carving, machinery has been brought into use; steam-power has been made to act on two points, one cutting, the other blunt, in such a manner that they shall travel, at the same time, and parallel with each other, over model and material; the hand having only to guide the blunt one over the model as it pleases, for the sharp one, consisting of a rapidly revolving rose-drill, to cut the other accordingly. Another system tried has been the pressing of the wood, in a damp state, into hot metal-moulds or dyes, and by this means to char it into the required shapes; but all these plans, however ingenious, have as yet failed, as far as the production of good work is concerned; their effect has been either confined to the execution of architectural and geometrical forms, or to reducing the cost—which they have done considerably—of third or fourth rate carving. Unfortunately, too, for some of these schemes, a sufficient supply has not been obtainable to keep the machinery going, even at the reduced prices; for steam, though of wonderful power for quickening operations where large quantities are required, is of too expensive a character for things only called for now and then. Machinery may, without doubt, be made to facilitate the rough-hewing out of carved work, and in this way, that is, simply as a preparer, it has shown itself of considerable service; especially in wood, ivory, and such things as present an even regular resistance, and do not wear away the tool too

rapidly. For marble it has not been found so available owing to the rapid friction bruising it, so as to render it afterwards unfit to receive the necessary finish by hand. The best application of machinery is shown in the reduced copies of statues, made in ivory, alabaster, metal, &c., at M. Collas' establishment at Paris, and by Mr. Cheverton of London. The latter gentleman keeps his plan of working a secret, perhaps wisely for himself, as he has no patent to protect him, the machine which he uses having been invented by the great Watt, for the amusement of his leisure moments. All these inventions, the whole of them modern, including the electrotpe process for depositing metals in moulds and on the surfaces of figures, have no other effect than the one before attributed to them, the facilitating the processes of Art. In a word, mechanism may increase Art-imitations, but the only power, from which Art itself can derive excellence, is that power of volition imparted through the nerves, at whose command the muscles of the hand depict the image that exists within the brain.



## CHAPTER FIFTH.

---

### OF ORNAMENTAL ART IN GENERAL.

---

NATURE has her animate and her inanimate beings, Art her high and her decorative classes; and in the former as well as the latter, the two are so closely linked together as to render it difficult sometimes to ascertain to which a particular example belongs; for efforts in Art often possess, like the Zoophytes of her mistress, some attributes which mark them as appertaining to the higher orders, and others again which connect them unmistakeably with the lower. The definition, therefore, which we have given of the aim of High Art does not wholly fail when applied to the ornamental branches. The word "suggestive" may still be retained as expressive of that aim or end, or if necessary in any way to qualify it, "apposite" may perhaps serve in its place. Thus, in ornament, living forms are mixed up with foliage, animal and vegetable creations are combined, not merely for the sake of grace or beauty, but to express at the same time, by their appositeness, certain ideas. We would refer, as a proof of this, to the

bronze fountain exhibited by J. P. André of Paris, in the eastern nave. Water-nymphs, reeds and other plants, are grouped with aquatic birds, in union with architectural forms, to compose a whole, elegant to the eye, and at the same time symbolic or suggestive to the mind. It is not our intention to go into the difference that exists between the various styles, so often written upon; we would rather refer the student in the Art back to Nature herself, from whence the Grecian, the Gothic, or Mediæval, the Louis Quatorze, and all the other styles or mannerisms have been derived; and bid him look to the endless combinations which she presents to him, and learn to adapt them to his own purposes. The story of the Acanthus as the origin of the Corinthian capital, is known to every schoolboy. There are, if not Acanthi, at least other plants in every conservatory in England, capable of suggesting hundreds of the like agreeable combinations. Ornament is but nature deprived to a certain extent of one of her features, variety, and brought under the dominion of geometrical rules. The English school has shown itself particularly deficient in ornamental Art, and it will be better at once to acknowledge the error, and endeavour to find out its cause, than to attempt to mask an inferiority apparent to even a casual observer. It is the custom among our manufacturers, who have to do with ornamental Art, to exclaim against the efforts of English designers, and to declare themselves obliged to employ foreigners because the English do not possess the faculty for

ducing the beauty and variety which they require ; and in this they speak to a certain extent truth, but it is not to be attributed to the cause to which they assign it. There is no natural inability in the Englishman to excel in ornamental or decorative Art, but he has never been placed in circumstances so to do. The foreigner, whether he be a worker in metal, or a designer for textile goods, whether he be a house-decorator, or a modeller in the potteries, is educated for the particular branch to which he devotes himself ; he is well read in his Art, he has passed half his life studying in galleries or collections, containing the *élite* examples of his calling ; he is, in fact, not only by right of his talent an artist, but he is also one who has devoted his whole energies to the walk in which he practises ; and Art on the continent is of so varied a nature, and so universally spread among all classes of society, that he suffers no degradation from turning his attention to that which we term manufacture, but which, with them, is almost as much High Art, in one sense of the word, as are painting and sculpture with us. Not so in England, Art with us moves in a more limited sphere, and artists are as yet a less numerous class than in other countries. What talent we possess is, in consequence, wholly devoted to the three recognised walks, painting as understood in its legitimate style, sculpture in the simple pure manner, and architecture on its grandest scale. An artist, obliged by circumstances to desert these, and turn his thoughts to decorative works, feels that he



has lost caste, and not only that, he enters into a class of Art of the peculiarities of which he knows little, and his method of designing, his way of thinking, his manner of combining forms, are in consequence unsuited to what he is then called upon to perform. In truth he is, in nine cases out of ten, one, who, either from want of talent or industry, or to speak charitably, from want of opportunity, has failed in that which he first tried, and has been obliged to devote himself to other and less difficult tasks. Need it be said that this person is in no condition to contend with his foreign competitors, even leaving out of the question the lack of appreciation for such things here? It is pleasant, however, to illustrate an assertion like this, by looking at the opposite side of the page, and pointing out exceptions to sweeping, and may be censorious remarks like the above; but it must be understood that we consider them merely as exceptions, and that as such they do not alter the argument; on the contrary, if the effect be found to vary with the cause, it serves as evidence that we are correct.

We would first mention the name of J. Bell, an artist of high talent, and who appears to have felt this deficiency in English Art-manufactures, and to have determined on remedying it by every means in his power. His genius, peculiarly poetical, is at the same time singularly adapted for raising the character of ornamental Art. With a thorough love for simplicity, a knowledge of what constitutes purity of style, and a power of loosening the reins

of his fancy when he pleases, he knows how to elevate the character of all he touches, and to give to it those charming varieties displayed in everything entrusted to his care. The effect of his superintendence is seen in the gates, and in other castings, of the Coalbrook-Dale Company; in the porcelain-works of Messrs. Copeland and Minton; and, here and there, in furniture exhibited in different parts of the building. No artist, in truth, is so well entitled to praise as he is, for the varied character of his contributions. We may mention, as another exception to our assertion, that the decorative branches of Art want with us talent and education, Mr. Cotterill, the well-known modeller of the beautiful groups in silver exhibited by Messrs. Garrard. He himself may perhaps object to our calling him a decorative or ornamental artist; indeed, we feel we are doing him unintentionally an injustice; for, in truth, his work, or rather his part of the work, belongs more properly to Schedule A, or the higher branch. But it is so mixed up with the decorative, that we cannot well speak of them separately. His spirited equestrian groups stand unrivalled in the Exhibition, for energy and character. In acquaintance with the anatomical structure of the horse, he has no one to rival him, and he combines with that knowledge an eye for its points, which gains for him the approbation of the jockey, as well as the man of taste. The mention of this gentleman's name in connection with silver work, brings us naturally to another drawback, which has hitherto told with fearful effect in this

attractive line of Art; and which alone would account for the superiority found in the specimens exhibited by M. Froment Meurice and other French silversmiths. Besides the want of artistic education among those employed, there is a system in the trade utterly destructive to good work. In the first place, it is very rare that the artist's name is at all heard of, the manufacturers, in whose hands the business lies, taking care to conceal it, lest he should rise into importance, and be able to act independently of them. Messrs. Garrard are exceptions in this respect also, and they have found the benefit of allowing Mr. Cotterill to have the credit of what he does. Indeed, no artist will ever exert himself beyond a certain extent unless he feel confident that reputation will follow excellence. In the second place, the system of burnishing and frosting, of which the manufacturers are so fond, or, to do them justice, of which their customers are so fond, acts against the display of good modelling and chasing; for in a bright surface the niceties of form are scarcely discernible, and in the cold frosted one the lights and shades assume a dry opaque character, detestable to an educated eye. The evil, however, does not stop there. the violent contrast between the two prevents the due blending of parts, and brings forth prominently lines, which should by rights be secondary; in a word, throws the whole into utter discord. There is nothing of this in the French, nor indeed in any of the foreign silver-work. With them, if any contrast of colour be attempted, it is



done delicately and judiciously. Their aim and pride is to show the workmanship; not to protrude the richness of the material, as with us. Let us examine the system of the trade, and describe shortly the plan of getting up a service of plate, and we shall then see immediately why artistic excellence is so often found wanting. A nobleman, we will suppose, has a certain sum to expend on a work in silver; he does not go to an artist, for none are to be found possessing the necessary means for carrying it out; he offers it, therefore, to a tradesman, a highly respectable man, and who has had some experience in such matters, but who can scarcely lay claim to any direct knowledge or power in Art; or, more probably, he calls for competition, in order to obtain a choice of designs. The silversmith sets his artist to making the necessary drawings, and, being well aware that others are doing the same, he impresses him with the necessity of a great display for the money, feeling, of course, that without that he has no chance of success. His customer, in all probability, is no judge of good Art; what he requires is a fine glittering service that will make a grand show on his table, and gratify him by demonstrating to his friends the magnitude of his wealth—a species of vanity thoroughly English. We will say nothing of the meretricious stuff likely to creep into designs made to meet such tastes, but suppose that our man be successful in pleasing his patron, and that he obtain the order; our reader will imagine, perhaps, that

he will set to work with the energy of a Cellini, anxious only about its excellence. No such thing; we have said he is a tradesman, not an artist, willing to do fair justice between man and man, but still, as is natural enough, looking carefully to his own profits; he has undertaken, too, most likely, to execute for a certain sum a design, which, if well done, would require three times the amount. Now come the various contrivances, not for insuring careful finish in the work, but for cheapening the labour. We will leave him to do as he pleases about the thickness of his casts, for that has nothing to do with the question. He has agreed, in all probability, that there shall be so much weight of silver, and that he shall be paid by the ounce. It is the workmanship which must be got through at the least possible expense; it is, therefore, portioned out to the artist at a fixed price, and such a price as leaves him the choice between two things, either to starve, or to execute it as hastily as he possibly can; and, as he has no reputation at stake in it beyond just the necessity of satisfying his employer, common sense will suggest which way his decision is likely to run; and even if the model be finished in a respectable style, the system of chasing is utter destruction to its merits. The whole surface of the silver-castings is gone over by the hand of a man ignorant of the rudiments of his profession, who, if he be engaged on a figure, knows neither the anatomy of its naked form, nor the principles which guide the drapery by which it is partly covered. These men, as is

well known by the modellers themselves, are utterly reckless as to the delicacies of form, their only care being to produce clear, sound surfaces, that shall serve well for the matting, burnishing, frosting, and other trickeries by which the eye is dazzled, and the real beauties of Art are hidden or defaced. There are exceptions, no doubt, to this system, and many cases in which it is much modified, still it acts more strongly than the world at large are inclined to believe, on silver work generally, and before improvement can take place it must be eradicated. The Great Exhibition displays some of the most favourable illustrations of the state of the Art in England; yet, in point of real merit, they fall, with one or two exceptions, far short of the foreign specimens, owing to no other reason than the difference of system under which each is produced. It may be said in reply, that Mr. Bailey's talents are frequently brought to bear upon our best silver work, in order to ensure excellence, and that artists like him and Mr. Brown are entitled to more respect than is implied by the foregoing remarks. True; but Mr. Bailey is prevented by the other calls of his profession from devoting that time and attention to it which it requires, and we doubt if he himself would not join in what we have said respecting the sufferings of the unhappy model under the hands of the remorseless chasers; besides, we are ready to admit that the employing of such artists as these has tended to raise, in a great measure, the quality of English silver-work. The specimens in the Exhibi-



tion with which they have had to do are the best in the English department; but Mr. Brown will not venture to deny that his beautifully-designed Candelabrum exhibited by Messrs. Hunt and Roskell, in the nave of the building, would bear more working out of the details, nor will he attempt to justify the burnishing and frosting which has so destroyed the harmony of the parts. Surely he knows better than to approve of such things; if he does not, then he neither designed the admirable relief of "Night and Morning" which surrounds the stem, nor massed in the parts of the modelling with such exquisite skill. We are sure, however, that, though he may be obliged to bend to the prevailing taste for this gew-gaw glitter, he knows better than to approve of it in his own mind. The foreigner, M. Antoine Vechte, belonging also to Messrs. Hunt and Roskell's establishment, seems, we know not why, free from this subjugation; his unfinished shield and his vase, with the contest of Jupiter and the Titans represented upon it, stand unrivalled in the place.

From the remarks on the want of education in ornamental Art, it may appear as if we had forgotten the existence of Government Schools of Design; but, admirably conducted as they are, their effect has only commenced. There is no doubt that they have already done much, and that much more may yet be hoped from them; but it is equally certain that a great deal has still to be accomplished before any very apparent change can be wrought. One of the things these schools have at

present to contend with is, that, in many cases, the pupil, when he feels himself possessed of more talent than his companions, turns to the higher branches, and thus the establishments become merely helpers to the Royal Academy of Arts, instead of educators for manufacturing purposes. Still it is from these schools that improvement must be hoped for; and justice bids us say, that that hope is fully sustained by the energetic manner in which they are conducted, and the excellent system practised in them. As an illustration of the good derived from them, we may refer to a gold and silver electro-plate table, belonging to her Majesty, designed by George Stanton, a pupil of the Birmingham branch, and executed in Mr. Elkington's factory. A glance at the engraving of it in the "Illustrated Official Catalogue," will at once show the elegant fancy displayed in its parts, and the graceful harmony of line by which the whole is combined.

Turning to more general remarks on ornamental Art, it may be observed that in its lower departments, where imitation of nature ceases, and geometrical form begins, grace and beauty of line become the ultimate aim, instead of a means to a further end. In these, a system of curves, varying in their size and in their degrees of convexity, are brought into harmony by repetition; their character being made to assimilate with what precedent has established as belonging to certain orders of architecture or ornament.

Colour, which in high Sculptural Art is omitted, or

used sparingly, is here a powerful medium of imparting pleasure, and the mixture of rich materials, and many kinds of work, in the same thing admissible, as is shown particularly in the Cinque-cento style. We may mention as examples, the splendid Jewel-Case of her Majesty, designed by L. Grüner, and executed at Mr. Elkington's establishment, in which the finest specimens of every species of Art are introduced, and made to harmonize; and the magnificent Shield, presented by the King of Prussia to the Prince of Wales, in which relievos in silver of the highest character are united with enamelling, and other kinds of decorative work of the best quality. This last may serve, too, as an example of the glorious results arising from the union of various talents to one purpose. The designs, modelling, chasing, and enamelling, are all by different artists, each the first in his line, and claiming for himself the credit due for his part.

There are certain kinds of ornamental Art, which of necessity have gone into disuse, owing to the great increase in the value of labour. Among these may be reckoned cameo-cutting; the immense time and patience required to cut the various kinds of onyx, or striated stones, used for them, rendering it impossible now for the artists to obtain the requisite remuneration. This is scarcely to be regretted: for though the ancients found these precious substances valuable for displaying their talent, and have handed down to us cameos and intaglios, the beauty of which astonishes as well as delights us, it is scarcely to be



wished, that months and years should be now spent in that which, to be appreciated, requires the use of the magnifying glass; and which, if viewed by the naked eye, merely as a decorative object, is surpassed in beauty by many other things, on which comparatively little labour has been bestowed. We have accordingly but few specimens belonging to this walk of Art in the Exhibition; and those few come principally from Rome, where labour is cheap, and where the virtuoso feeling for Art is most looked to. The Cameo of most pretensions is the one by Passamonti, a pupil, says the catalogue, of Canova, and first engraver to the Roman mint. We presume therefore that it may be considered a first-rate work of the day. Though possessing much merit, it does not come up to our ideas of excellence. Its design, "Jupiter overcoming the Titans," is well enough, though we hardly know whether to look upon it as original or not, so like is it to what we have seen in the antique. The magnifying glass does not bring out in it new beauties, as in the ancient cameos; but merely enlarged parts, smooth, and somewhat unsatisfactory, showing but little anatomical knowledge, either in the animal or human figures; and as this cameo is rather of a large size, there is no excuse for the want of finish. In the Marlborough collection, at Blenheim, are antique cameos a quarter the size, and containing double the number of figures; in which the magnifying glass discloses forms equal, for delicacy of drawing, to the antique statues. The price named

for M. Passamonti's cameo is, we believe, five hundred guineas; which will alone show how useless it is, in these times, to pursue an Art so costly, and where so much labour is followed by such small results. Another kind of cameo too has sprung up, and helped in a measure to do away with the demand for the first; which, with the exception of durability, must be admitted to possess all the qualities of the original. In these shell-cameos, Rome also excels: her chief artist, I. Savalini, exhibiting a number of very beautiful ones, mostly copies from the works of Thorwaldsen, Gibson, and other eminent sculptors. Their price, as is well known, admits of their being purchased by the multitude; though of course, as in every other department of Art, that price varies much, according to quality; the best, owing to their scarcity, fetching sums amply remunerative to the artist. England has attempted nothing in connection with the cutting of shell-cameos. There are workmen among us who supply the cheap rubbish sold in the shops for a few shillings, but none who apply artistic talent to it, which cannot be accounted for, as the shell, out of which they are cut, is as common, and as easily procured here as in Italy, and the working is of the simplest possible character. Considering that we have ladies of talent and education anxious for some light kind of remunerative employment, it seems curious that none of them should turn their hand to it, especially as the elegant fancy by which female genius is especially characterized, is eminently adapted to produce excellence

in the Art; and even where invention is wanting, there are many antique heads and figures which, rendered in relief, would form beautiful personal ornaments, and fully repay the labour of the copier. These few hints are thrown out, in the hope that a consideration of them may induce some to make the trial for themselves. We must add, however, that the only hope of making it remunerative in this country, lies in the production of excellence. Cheap-manufactured cameos are already made here by wholesale, and the cutters of them barely obtain an existence by their labour.

Another kind of Art unsuited to the present age is mosaic work, an inlaying of small coloured particles of glass and other substances, so as to represent pictures by their combined surface. It is curious undoubtedly to see to what extent labour will bring it, especially when we consider the means employed; but when we find specimens notified as the work of fifteen years, whose merit amounts at the most to that of a third or fourth rate picture, we are inclined to believe it is labour lost, even allowing a free translation to the words "fifteen years," and taking it for granted that they merely mean a very long time. No people are so attracted with these things as those unacquainted with the real purposes of Art. The immense labour is evident to them, and from that they calculate their value; but *Finis coronat opus*, if, after all, that only is done which can be better accomplished by other means, in one-tenth part of the time, what signifies the



number of years that have been wasted on them? Rome sends us the most curious specimens in this Art also, in which, as before hinted, she attempts rivalry with the effects of the brush. The best defence of mosaic work lies in its durability and perfect preservation of colour; but the former of the two is, we think, somewhat overrated. It may retain a place among the many methods adopted for the purposes of ornamental Art, but as an attempt to imitate, or perpetuate its highest efforts, we are inclined to think it has had its day.

In wood-carving there is a very close rivalry between England and foreign countries. France, perhaps, takes the lead in design, principally by the splendid Sideboard furnished by Messrs. Fourdinois; for a description of which we would refer to the Official Catalogue. It will be sufficient if we apportion to it the words we have so often used, "suggestive," and "apposite," the meaning of which it amply illustrates. In execution it falls in no way short of its design; so that, altogether, it may be pronounced the leading work of this class in the Exhibition. The gorgeous bed and fittings-up of the Austrian room are too well known to need criticism, yet we must say, they appear to fall far short of the last mentioned production, in point of real merit. Belgium shows some fine church carvings by Geerts of Louvain, which display in a strong degree what is termed religious sentiment. They are imitations of the Mediæval style, and, if placed in the churches belonging to that time, would appear no doubt quite in

unison, but we cannot admit the pedantic mannerism, so prevalent in them, as proper examples to be copied ; in short, they seem quite out of place in a building professing to contain specimens of the manufactures of the present day. England is dependent for the support of her reputation in wood-carving on Mr. Rogers, and Mr. Wallis of Louth ; for, though the great Kenilworth sideboard, by Mr. Cooke of Warwick, is equally appropriate in its design with M. Fourdinois', it cannot be compared with it, either in the elegance of its forms, or the beauty of its details. The merits of Messrs. Rogers and Wallis are chiefly those of execution, though the Royal Cradle, carved by the first-named gentleman, and designed by his son, is equal in all points to any of the foreign works. It is to be looked on, without doubt, more as a work of Art than as a thing for real use, the probability being that none of the royal children ever slept in it for one hour ; but we cannot help feeling, notwithstanding its elegant shape, and the fanciful work with which it is adorned, that there is about it an air of unfitness ; the hard light-coloured wood, even imagining a good supply of quilting and covering within, suggests the idea of discomfort. Now this is wrong ; in nature everything is beautiful, and at the same time fully adapted to its purpose ; and in Art everything should appear so likewise, whatever may be the extent to which it is ornamented. We should not have ventured this remark on a work otherwise so lovely, but that there are other specimens in the Exhibition, showing also the

appropriation of materials to uses for which they are unsuited ; an error that has arisen without doubt from intense seeking after novelty, but which should nevertheless be checked.

We had wished to make a few observations on the porcelain ware, but space almost forbids. England, too, is working in this Art under such different circumstances from other countries, that it is impossible to make a fair comparison. France has her government manufactories, where specimens are produced, regardless of cost, and solely for the sake of raising the character of the Art itself. England treats it simply as a trade, and cares only to supply the wants, and gratify the taste of her purchasers ; yet she is in no way behind, considering these circumstances, and has lately made enormous strides in the right path, principally through the exertions of Messrs. Minton and Copeland. One hint we trust she will take and use to advantage. A great improvement may be made, at little or no expense, by adopting more freely, as the French do, the designs of the old painters. In the Sevres-Room is a Tazza, with a copy of Raffael's "Galatea" printed in simple blue colour on its top, that has scarcely required more labour than does our cheapest ware, and yet is a finished work of Art.

Ornament entwines itself into so many kinds of manufactures, and assumes in connection with them such a variety of phases, that it is utterly impossible, within the limits prescribed, to follow it through all its branches.



yet we must not conclude this chapter without a remark on the Mediæval Room. No one of taste can enter it, without at once feeling the power that is derived from unity of design and purpose. Quaint and curious as are the many forms here assembled, and various as are their colours, this singleness of association harmonizes them all, and concentrates them for the one powerful impression to be made on the spectator—an impression which may be described as oscillating between awe and pleasure. As examples of the magical shapes produced by the old church-architects with their compasses, they are perfect; but so prescribed and incapable of further variations, that, as concerns their power of suggesting new ideas and thoughts, we must pronounce the whole a *hortus siccus*. Were it advisable to go back to such things, we had not needed, for the purposes of Art at least, a Great Exhibition. But what induced the arrangers of them to place at the door of the room, the model of a window for a lunatic-asylum, provisionally registered, as the label attached to it informs us? Is it to remind us of the consequence of too close a contemplation, of too thorough an absorption, in the seducing paraphernalia that surrounds us? Is it to say to us with Lear,—We mean no pun—

“O! that way madness lies; let me shun that;

No more of that—”

At any rate, we will take the hint so given, and close our observations.

As a last remark before quitting the subject of Orna-

mental Art, let us observe that, though the Great Exhibition will probably tend more to the improvement of it in this country than any other feature of our manufactures, there is one thing it has a tendency to produce, and which must be guarded against—a too great profusion and elaboration of ideas. Specimens, manufactured expressly for exhibitions, have a natural propensity to this, and in those created under the special excitement of this year, it must be expected to prevail. Ornament, to be useful, must be simple, and be produced by means within the power of the many. A few costly articles, made to suit the luxurious habits and extravagant wants of an over-wealthy patronage, will not mark us as a nation possessing taste. To really deserve that title, the commonest thing which we use, the simplest object with which we are surrounded in our daily walks of life, must display it. Taste must find its way into the cottage as well as the palace, and show itself, as with the ancient Greeks, not the result of occasional efforts, but as if it had grown up with us until it had become part and parcel of ourselves, necessary for our enjoyment, and inseparable from our existence.

## CHAPTER SIXTH.

---

### STAINED GLASS.

---

GLASS-STAINING stands aloof from almost every other species of Art, owing to the nature of what it aims at, the character of the subjects it deals with, and the peculiarity of the means it adopts. Created solely for the interior of churches and the decoration of halls, it has little sympathy with out-door, open-air, cheerful nature; on the contrary, religious, gloomy, and even fanatic, in its character, it rejects all that is free and joyous, and seems to indulge in a splendid melancholy peculiar to itself, which it imparts to every object around it, imbuing it with its unearthly feeling, as it tints it with its gorgeous hues. Yet solitary, reserved, and unapproachable, as seems its character, it has to submit to the jurisdiction of another Art to which it is related. From Architecture, on whose pale walls it sends forth colour, it receives back in return a certain stiffness or formality, ever rightly an ingredient in its style, and which serves to connect the two in harmony



of purpose. If we say that no stained glass, which does not partake of this feeling, can be termed successful; if we assert that all attempts, to represent objects in a purely natural style, are futile, we shall ourselves be accused of gloomy fanaticism, and perhaps of a wish to circumscribe and narrow the limits of the Art. Nevertheless, we will venture to make the assertion, albeit that, in so doing, we are excluding much that might otherwise be admired. Of a wish to circumscribe the limits of glass-painting we are in no way fearful; for, though to break through the shackles of prejudice is often a feature in genius, nothing is more conducive to excellence, whether in this or in any other department of Art, than a due understanding of its proper boundaries. The following lines, from Sir Walter Scott's "Lay of the last Minstrel," seem to tally well with the previous observations, and to demonstrate his perception of the effects of stained glass, when combined with Architecture, and connected with scenes in unison with itself:

"The moon on the east oriel shone  
Through slender shafts of shapely stone,  
By foliated tracery combined;  
Thou would'st have thought some fairy's hand  
'Twixt poplars straight the ozier wand,  
In many a freakish knot, had twined;  
Then framed a spell, when the work was done,  
And changed the willow-wreaths to stone.  
The silver light, so pale and faint,  
Shew'd many a prophet, and many a saint,

Whose image on the glass was dyed ;  
Full in the midst, his Cross of Red  
Triumphant Michael brandished,  
And trampled the Apostate's pride.  
The moon-beam kiss'd the holy pane,  
And threw on the pavement a bloody stain."

The assertion that colour is the primary object of stained glass will, we are aware, appear a truism ; yet this has not been always fully felt, as witness the miserable attempts after the designs of West, at Windsor, and the utter failure of the window at Oxford, after Sir Joshua Reynolds. It is not, however, the bare assertion that we wish to make, but rather to draw consideration to the kind of colour most suitable to it, and to give reasons for the peculiarities of that colour, reconcileable with common sense, and, at the same time, with the purposes of the Art. No one will venture to pronounce the system of colour, adopted in stained glass, a natural one ; it is too splendid to be so termed ; besides, in nature colour is secondary, instead of primary ; but why should it not be natural ? Because, in the first place, stained glass is ever an assistant to Architecture, which is in itself not an imitative Art ; and, in the next place, it treats of things apart from common nature. The staining of church-windows is not intended alone to give colour to the building, but to separate the thoughts of those within it, from all association with the affairs of this life ; to disconnect them from everything outside the building, or irrelevant to that devotion for

which they are assembled ; for this reason, supernatural beings, saints and allegorical personages, are introduced ; parables of Scripture, visions of a future state, are represented ; subjects are chosen, which tend to separate the mind from that which is, and to connect it with that which is to be. Even in halls, where aristocratic pride and feudal grandeur are fostered by the Art, natural forms are rejected, and the monsters of heraldry substituted in their stead. It is apparent then to reason, that such things as these should not be coloured with the every-day tint of common nature—for this would but weaken their effect—but rather with the unearthly splendour, more properly belonging to them as supernatural beings. Stained glass fell into decay in this country with the decline of the Roman Catholic Church, and the examples handed down to us are all of an early age, when the art of drawing and knowledge of chiaro-oscuro, were in their infancy ; the consequence is, that, though powerful in their effect of colour, they are otherwise deficient as works of Art ; and arguments are used now, when the Art is reviving, to justify a return to this premature quaintness ; as if in its ancient days it had arrived at perfection, and nothing was left to us but to become servile copiers of what has gone before. Attempts have been made to depreciate modern glass, under pretence that certain colours are neither so brilliant nor so durable, as in the old ; that the system, now practised, of shading on the surface over the colours burnt into the body of the glass, is illegitimate, and liable



to decay. All these arguments are, however, in our opinion, false. As well might we go back to the pre-Raffaelite manner of painting, as imitate the defects in the old glass, which arose from the ignorance of the times. No Art must stand still; on the contrary, all means within reach must be used for excellence, and that excellence must be sought by reference to sound reasoning, not by following quaint antique prejudices. The prevailing weakness in modern stained glass, does not lie where most people fancy. As far as regards the chemical properties of colours, we have succeeded almost to the extent requisite; but in drawing, and in light and shade, we are as yet beginners. Like all symbolical Art, stained glass requires the purest style of outline, and, owing to mechanical difficulties of its own, only a very powerful chiaro-oscuro will serve its purpose. The danger attendant on the burning of large pieces, and on introducing many colours on the same piece, creates the necessity of joints, and the arrangement of these joints is one of the things requiring considerable ingenuity. The object is of course to conceal them as much as possible, that, when the whole is put together, it may appear one piece.

The strips of lead that compose these joints, and which, for the sake of strength are generally supported by wire to a frame-work of iron behind, are made to run round the outline of the figures, and along the dark lines of the draperies; they, in fact, constitute in themselves some of the chief drawing, and this alone will show the

nicety required in them. These opaque leaden lines, running round the figures, and through many of the parts, assume a black colour when the light shines through on the spectator, so that the figures are of necessity surrounded by a strong decided outline; and everyone, acquainted with the principles of chiaro-oscuro, knows that an object, so surrounded, must inevitably appear flat, unless the interior of the figure be filled up with light and shade of a corresponding strength. This is one of the things not properly studied among the specimens in the Great Exhibition. The Dante window, by Bertini, is an exception. Indeed, were we to point out all the excellences of this magnificent work, we should but repeat what we have before stated as the necessary qualities for perfection in the Art. In the specimen executed by Mr. Baillie, representing Shakspeare reading to Queen Elizabeth, it is perfectly understood, and thoroughly carried out. The shadows are there made strong, so as to subdue the effect of the opaque lines; and the lights, sparingly used, come out in consequence with increased brilliancy. Mr. Wailes, who feels the severity of outline necessary to the Art, and who evidently takes great pains in his designs, adopts another plan to meet this difficulty; instead of large dark powerful masses of shadow to conceal the black lines, he increases the strength of the other lines so as to harmonize with them. By this means the difficulty is partly got over, but not thoroughly; rotundity of parts is not effected, but unity of force is obtained. In

many of the qualities belonging to design, however, he is unsurpassed; his figures are full of dignity, the expression of the faces appropriate, and their draperies well arranged. The small French specimens, intended perhaps merely as sketches for larger works, exhibit much of what we have advocated, true outline, strong Rembrandt-like light and shade, and brilliant Titianesque colouring. The Belgians do not particularly excel, notwithstanding their beautiful windows in St. Gudule's Cathedral, at Brussels; and the well-known reputation of the old Flemish glass-workers; their efforts seem directed, rather to astonish by things unsuited to the Art, than to show excellence in that which it is really capable of.

We have in this short article made no allusion to the ancient glass staining, or to the matted patterns belonging to the early ages. The history of such things may be curious to the antiquarian, but tends in no way to improvement, nor have we alluded to any of the works in the Exhibition, where we have found the crudities of these bye-gone days imitated. In Canterbury Cathedral are some of the oldest specimens known, and though sadly dilapidated, they still show their excellence in colour. In New College, Oxford, is a magnificent window of a later date, when large figures began to be introduced, and when the Art in consequence assumed a higher position. To this we would point as an example of what we would wish to see. It has all the severity of style necessary to connect it with the Architecture; lofty sentiment



is portrayed in all the figures ; and a strong light and shade gives relief to the whole, in spite of difficulties already spoken of. On the other side of the same chapel may be seen a more modern window, executed in imitation of the older one, but failing from want of knowledge in drawing, and power in chiaro-oscuro. This powerful effect we must leave to the manufacturers themselves to accomplish as they please, either by the opacity of the colour, or by varying the thickness of the glass in different parts, as is frequently done. It is sufficient for a general treatise, if the character and purposes of an Art be clearly set forth, and fully explained.

## CHAPTER SEVENTH.

---

### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

---

IN the foregoing treatise, the origin of the Fine Arts has been touched upon, and some of their history adverted to—their value as a means of improvement has been dwelt upon—and their power over the mind discussed. The principles of the Fine Arts have been set forth, to show them founded on solid reasonings, not on fanciful aberrations of the brain ; their encouragement has been advocated, upon the ground of their real and intrinsic value to all, not upon the policy of benefiting a class. The Arts have been exhibited as necessary to civilized nations, as requisite to wealth and power, as containing a moral influence that softens the asperities of our character, and increases our enjoyments ; and a religious one, which ennobles our imagination, and draws us nearer to our God. They have been represented as dependent for excellence on education, growing as the hand of patronage has been held out to them, and fading when that hand has been withdrawn. It has been argued, that there is no well-

grounded cause why England should not be as celebrated in the Arts as in other things; and that it depends upon herself alone to be so. The disadvantages under which English Art has worked, have been hinted at, in the hope that attention may be called to them, and that they may be remedied. The merits of foreign Art have been allowed, but the prejudice in favour of it has been combated; while the desultory encouragement granted at home, has been contrasted with the regular organized system of patronage abroad, to account for peculiarities in each. An attempt has been made to show, that taste is connected with reason, and founded on nature and truth; and increase of taste among the people has been pointed out as the only method of raising Art, and of remedying the many mistakes now made respecting it. Some few remarks on individual works have been ventured upon, to indicate an opinion that a perception of beauties is more a proof of knowledge than a carping at defects; and that a just, but merciful, spirit of criticism will serve more to the advancement of good Art than any observations resulting from personal friendship, or party prejudice; a wish has been at the same time expressed that persons should depend on their own judgment, in preference to the dictum of professed writers. The Great Exhibition has been viewed as a great lesson which England has had to learn; and in which, after long comparison with herself, she has been called upon to stand forward in comparison with others, and, from that

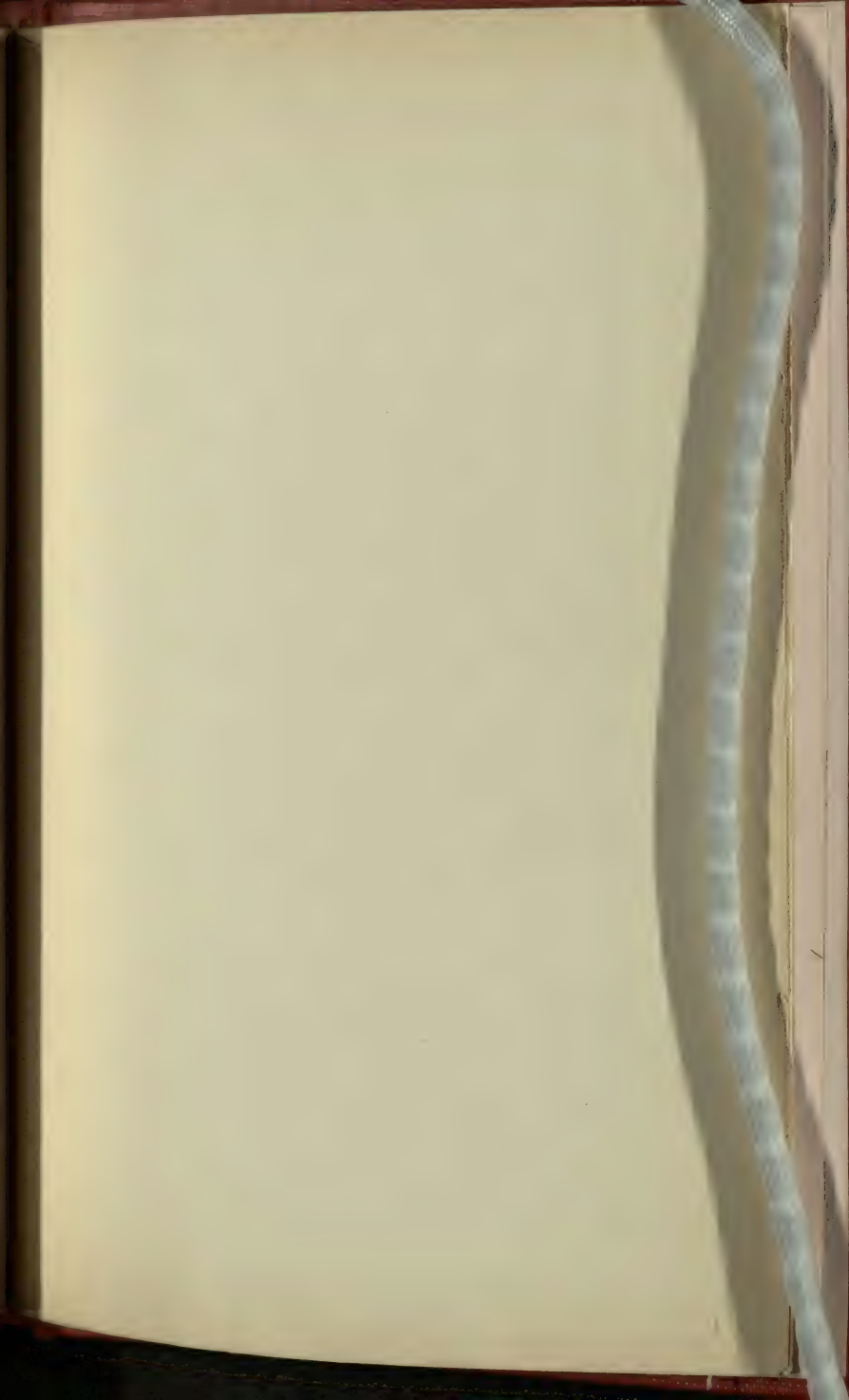


comparison, to gain new strength for the overcoming of yet greater difficulties, and the accomplishing of yet greater ends. The contents of that Exhibition have been deemed to show the boundless resources which nature has placed at the hand of man, and the vast intellect which she has given him to convert them to his use; the endless variety of his labours has been demonstrated, and the multitude of his enjoyments held up to view. Judgment and imagination, in proper balance with each other, have been seen to constitute his superiority; without the one, indeed, he is but a restless maniac; without the other but a curiously working animal; but, with both united, he becomes at once the representative of his Maker, and the ruler of the earth. Surely, then, when so many efforts are made to fortify the power of the one, some exertion should be used to heighten the pleasure of the other. This alone would justify the encouragement of Art, and sanction its cultivation; and it is this feeling that has excited us to become the exponents of its language, as well as the champions of its rights. If we have failed in our advocacy, it has arisen from want of ability in ourselves, not from lack of justice in our cause; and though we may have helped it in no one way, the truth will still stand, and eventually prevail.

Hereafter, when the intent and purport of this great gathering together of works shall have been wrought out, when man shall, under God's will, have accomplished knowledge, and his mind shall have freed itself from pre-

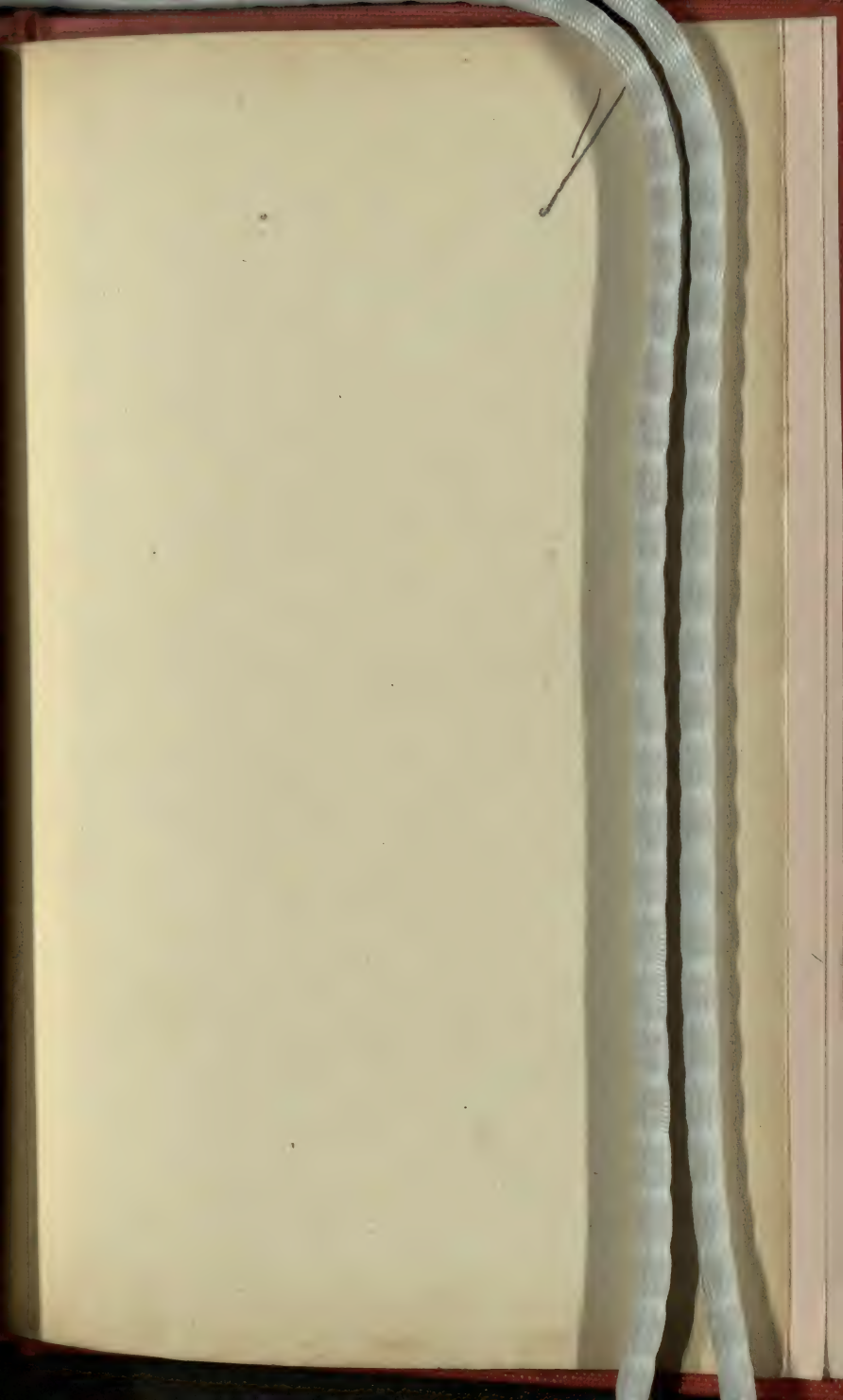
judice, and have become, like the building, all light; may it also, like that building, have its stable foundations of sober-coloured judgment, its up-rearing columns of variegated thought, and its airy roofs of many-tinted imagination: may it, like the treasures which that building displays, be composed of the grave and the gay, the simple and the ornamental, the useful and the enjoyable; may those, who have helped in this great cause, live to see its effect grow up around them, and the illustrious Prince, who has so nobly headed it, and supported it through all its difficulties, be noted in history, as one, who, while he fostered the genius of England, united in one great family all mankind.

THE END.

















V & A - NATIONAL ART LIBRARY



3 8041 800 13680 6

Bound by  
HMSO

JAY

JAY  
1981



